THE MUGHAL-MARATHA RELATIONS

TWENTY FIVE FATEFUL YEARS

(1682-1707)

G. T. KULKARNI

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Deccan College Postgraduate and Research Institute

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Dedicated to

Hon'ble Shri. Yeshwantraoji Chavan

as a token of
gratitude and respect
for his valuable contribution
to the cause of
historical researches.

Foreword

It gives me great pleasure to present the academic world this monograph by Dr. G.T.Kulkarni, Head of the History Department. Since the days when the eminent historian Prof. Shejawalkar was at the helm of the Department, it has presented new facts and coupled them with interpretative history. This two-fold approach has been continued by his successors as the present monograph by Dr. Kulkarni would bear out. It deals with a period of twenty five years encompassing the last quarter of the seventeenth century. This period is of crucial importance in the study of the history of the Marathas as much as for the rest of the country. The struggle launched by the Marathas during these eventful years established the right of the Marathas to emerge as an independant state. The noble example set before the Maratha nation by Shivaji undoubtedly served as an inspiration; but, for a people as a whole to rise as one and continue the struggle for twentyfive long years, there must have been a purpose, a cause, an ideal. Dr. Kulkarni has sought to search for it through contemporary records, mostly in Persian. These, almost as a rule, are documents emanating from the opposite camp, the Mughal officials,and as such, lend greater perspective to the entire presentation. Since Persian was the official language in India for well over four centuries, any attempt to discuss the history of the Medieval and the Maratha periods without recourse to Persian sources would leave large areas outside the reach of a student.

The present monograph fills up that lacuna to some extent at least. It is to be hoped that the Department of History will continue the efforts in this direction and will thus uphold the tradition of meaningful researches so characteristic of the Deccan College.

S.B.DEO.
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Abbreviations

AKH	Akhbarat -i- Darbar-i-Mu'alla
APV	Aitihasik Patravyavahar
APYV	Aitihasik Patre Yadi Vagaire
BISMQ	Bharat Itihas Samshodhak Mandala Quarterly
BUS	Basatin-us-Salatin
Epi.Indo Mos.	Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica
GPS	Gadadhar Pralhad Shakavali
Hadith	AManual of Hadith
HA	History of Aurangzib.
HD	History of Dharma Sastra
HF	Historical Fragments
HS	House of Shivaji
HGR	A History of Gingee and Its Rulers
JS	Jedhe Shakavali
J	Julus Year
KIS	Kavya Itihas Sangrah Patre Yadya, etc.
KK	Muntakhab-ul-Lubab-i-Muhammad Shahi
KGIS	Karvir Chatrapati Gharanyachya Itihasachi Sadhane.
MA	Ma'sir-i-Alamgiri
MD	Martin's Diary
MDG	The Military Despatches of a Seventeenth Century Indian General.
MM	Marathe Ani Mogul
MSIH	Miscellaneous Sources of Indian History
PIHC	Proceedings of Indian History Congress
PIHRC	Proceedings of Indian Historical Records Commission.
P&P	Parties and Polities at the Mughal Court 1707-1740
PSIH	Persian Sources of India History
Quran	The Holy Quran
Rajwade	Marathyanchya Itihasachi Sadhane

RMP	Rise of Maratha Power and Other Essays.
RPME	Religions Policy of Mughal Emperors
S	Saka
SCP	Shiv Charitra Pradip
SCS	Shiv Charitra Sahitya
SDA	Selected Documents of Aurangzeb's Regin
SHT	Shivaji And His Times
SKPS	Sambhajikalin Patra Sarsangrah
SPSS	Shivkalin Patra Sarsangrah
SL	Sanads and Letters
SW	Sawant Wadi Papers
SSK	Sri Sampradayachi Kagadpatre
VR	Vakil Reports
WPLI	War and Peace in the Law of Islam

Acknowledgements

The Department of History published 'Battle of Kharda Challenges and Responses' in 1980. This publication by the Departement came after a gap of almost twenty one years. But fortunately we did not have to wait so long for the next one. It is almost within a period of three years, since our last publication, that the present work was seen through the press.

Scholars and teachers of Maratha history have long felt the need of a comprehensive study of the Mughal Maratha relations, particularly in the context of Emperor Aurangzeb's exceptionally long stay in the Deccan and his incessant war with the Maratha power. This is an attempt to meet this need.

I have made an attempt to consult carefully all available sources, particularly those in Persian language. I have spared no pains to base my conclusions on sound evidence and have not by passed or neglected any material which was relevant to the subject and on which I was able to lay my hands. The work is based on several contemporary authorities, as well as official papers, and also the writings of later scholars, and historians.

I am greatly indebted to the works of many scholars, in particular my obligations to late Prof. Jadu Nath Sarkar is great, where I have differed, it has been with a full sense of temerity, but my opinions and views are based on fresh evidence and a re-examination of known evidence, in the light of the new one.

It would have been impossible to complete this work, without the help and guidence given to me by my teacher Prof. G.H.Khare. Equally well, I am indebted to Dr. M.S.Mate, a scholar of great repute, my colleague in the Institute and a wellknown authority on Medieval Archaeology of the Deccan. With him I discussed many a view point expressed in the present work. He shared my

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July:1983. G.T. Kulkarni

Introduction

The present work is a fresh attempt to understand the history of the twenty-five years 1682 to 1707 that proved to be of crucial importance to both the Marathas and Mughals. Although Mughal-Maratha hostilities had started in the 1660, during the life time of Shivaji himself, from 1682 onwards the confrontation became more direct and the ensuing struggle continued for quarter of a century. This phase began on or because of the death of one king, viz. Shivaji and ended on the death of the other, i.e. Alamgir. The roots were buried deep in the past but all the events will not find a place here, only those directly affecting the period under discussion will. There is really no need for justification for choosing this particular period for discussion - its importance is almost self-evident. Still a word by way of explanation may not be entirely out of place. The continuous struggle brought to the fore the real objectives and aspirations, the points of weakness and strength, in both the contending parties as no other period has done.

* * * *

Contestants

For the Mughals it meant a successful fulfilment of their dream of an empire that embraced the whole of India. For the Marathas it was an opportunity to liberate their homeland that was chafing under foreign domination for well over three centuries. For the Mughals it meant fulfillment of the duty of every true soldier of Islam - i.e. establishing dar-ul-Islam where dar-ul-harb existed. For the Marathas it was an opportunity to save their age-old religion from

obliteration. The Mughal objective was embodied in the person of the Emperor, the shrewd, cunning, determined Alamgir. The Marathas were inspired not by an individual but by a principle Maharashtra dharma - a twin determination - my country, my religion.

Sources

A general statement to this effect had been made by students of Maratha history since M.G.Ranade. The task of substantiating it (or disproving it) through a detailed examination of the happennings of these years was underdtaken by this author. It could be achieved only if the large mass of Persian records mainly news-letters or akhbarat of the period were subjected to careful analysis and study. The present work represents the fruits of such a study. Slightly later on would be found a brief note on the records examined and utilized by the author. Almost all of these are unpublished. The facts revealed by them were checked with other published sources - mostly Marathi and English. Interpretations offered by earlier scholars have of course been borne in mind.

Historical Perspective

The rule of the Mughals started in 1526. But they were the last of the Islamic dynasties that ruled India. The earliest was the so called 'Slave' dynasty. But even they were not the first, that honour goes to the Arab generals who conquered parts of Sind in 712.

Growth of Islamic Rule

Against the sharp and swift Muslim conquests elsewhere, the Indian career of Muslim arms was an extremely slow business. In 712 A.D., a part of Sind was conquered by the Arabs . It remained under Muslim domination for some time but failed to act as spearhead of India's conversion to Islam. The next Indian clash with Muslim arms occured three centuries thereafter when Jaypal, ruler of Kabul, North Western Frontier and Punjab sought conclusions with his Muslim neighbour, Subukatgin. Jaypal was driven back, but

it took Subuktgin's son and successor, years of hard campaigning to establish his powers in the plains of the Punjab and Multan.

It was in 1180 A.D. when Muhammad Ghori occupied Lahore, Prithviraj of Delhi got alarmed at the establishment of a new strong power in his neighbourhood and moved his armies northwards to challenge Muhammad Ghori. In the battle of Taraori (1192) he defeated Muhammad Ghori. But within a period of one year, the latter again marched against Prithviraj and in the battle that ensued Prithviraj fell fighting, and Muhammad Ghori was able to consolidate his power in the Punjab.

The thirteenth century witnessed the expansion of Muslim power in the whole of Northern India except Rajputana. In the fourteenth century the Muslim rulers of Delhi invaded the South. It began with the Khaljis and ended with the Tughluqs. However, it was only in the Deccan that roots of Muslim power took to the soil and eventually enabled the establishment of the Bahmani power in the Deccan.

The Sultanate period which roughly covered the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries is not a period of ever-expanding Muslim rule in India much less a continuous period of conquest. The Muslim conquest begun in 712 A.D. was not completed even by 1526. It was only under Akbar and Shah Jahan that maximum expansion could be achieved.

Centuries of Muslim rule at Delhi had failed to convert a substantial number of the population to Islam. There was no easy swift and complete conquest of the country or conversion of its population. Indians tenaciously resisted the march of the invaders from the North West.

Nature of Islamic State In India :

What was the nature of Islamic state and Islamic law as practised by India's Muslim rulers? A Historical analysis of it would help us in understanding the nature of the sustained

struggle of the Indians in general and between Aurangzeb and the Marathas in particular.

In the Muslim countries of West Asia, the Shar'ia or Islamic law had develped into a very rigid form. The political, social and religious conditions in medieval India were quite at variance from those in West Asian countries where Islam had originated. Therefore, the Muslim rulers during this period found themselves involved in situations, with which the Shar'ia was hardly compatible. Infact, difficult political situations demanded a big break away from the rigidity of Islamic law if they were to be surmounted. Therefore they had to deviate from it, as and when occasion demanded. This deviation brought out an essential change in the nature of Islamic state in Medieval India, so much so that in the true sense of the word,state in India could not be called an orthodox Islamic state as understood in West Asia.

The nature of this deviation is varied. It may not be possible for us to undertake a full length discussion of the subject. However, broadly speaking, the sultans adopted a few non-Islamic features such as the show and pomp of royalty, appropriation of bait-ul-mal for their personal gain and a much more eloquent feature was the acceptance of shedding of Muslim blood, which orthodox Shar'ia had totally forbidden. Besides this, they had already started disregarding the authority of the Khalifa.

The kingdom of Delhi was founded in 1205 by Qutbud-Din Aibak. Iltutmish his successor began the practice of seeking recognition from the Khalifa and most of the later sultans followed in his footsteps. But in practice, this had little effect on the succession or kingship of a particular ruler and the Khalifa could hardly excercise any effective control over this so called 'governors' or 'viceroys'. In other words during these three centuries, the government became a personal acquisition. One enjoyed it as long as one had the strength of arms to do so. The temporal control and obligation to follow the Muslim law as preached and

practised by Khalifa, had long ceased to be effective in respect of Muslim rulers in India. The rulers were only theoretically bound to an outside religious head. This extraordinary change in attitude sprang up because they ruled over a large and preponderantly non-Muslim population. This is not only true about the rulers of Sultanate period, but is equally so about the Mughal rulers of India during the 16th and the 17th century.

Muslims by faith and upbringing, these rulers were familiar only with the Muslim way of doing things. this alone appeared to them the normal way. In respect of their Muslim subjects the Sultans assumed a vague responsibility to ensure that Muslim subjects conform to Islamic practices in their day to day life. But as far as the large number of Hindu subjects were concerned, the sultans never attempted to impose the civil law of Islam. This non-Muslim population had continued to have recource to their own courts, panchayats etc. and thus were outside the pale of the Sultanate's institutions. This was accepted by the Sultans more as political expediency than any thing else, and that also implicitly, never explicitly.

The Ulama or theologians on the other hand expected sultans to wage a constant war against the Hindus. They made consistent efforts to persuade them that their true duty was to convert dar-ul-harb into dar-ul-Islam. The rulers were reminded what Muhammad had said 'He who exerts himself (jahada) exerts only for his soul'[1]. A Muslim state was duty bound to declare a Jihad on recalcitrant individuals and communities. Thus by waging a constant jihad, the Hindus were to be degraded and humiliated, they were to be prohibited from making an open display of idolatrous practices. Most of the Ulama considered that the payment of jizya was necessary and that it was meant to humiliate the Hindus. Its imposition would accord the Hindus an inferior and dependent status. Needless to say it would have created perpetual antagonism, between the followers of the two religions.

But the Sultans were quick to grasp the realities of the situation. They and their nobles were pragmatists and were not willing to follow this potentially destructive policy. It would have in course of time totally alienated the local people and the Hindu rajas who were having effective control over large Hindu population. In fact they desired an active alliance with them and therefore were prepared to make certain concessions. They were more than convinced that the directives of the Ulama ran counter to considerations of state policy. Thus though the Ulamas had advocated a rigorous and rigid religious policy, the Sultans had never put it into practice. As a result we notice under the Lodi and Sur rulers, association of Hindu zamindars in the service of the state had expanded at various levels.

A typical example of this difference in interests and attitudes is that of Ala-ud-Din Khilji. He was anxious to know what the Muslim jurists thought of his administrative innovations. When he was informed that most of his administrative practices lacked 'legal sanctions', he was enraged. And the Qazi out of fright then declared that inspite of their being 'unlawful' the Sultan was free to govern the country as he thought fit.

But one has to remember that the policies pursued by the Sultans were a deviation from orthodox Islamic preaching. In as much as they were ruling a population with a different religion, tolerance seemed to be the wisest course. But it always left the way open for recourse to more rigorous and orthodox means for attaining the same political goal and it was always possible for a more fanatical ruler to impose Islamic law and practices with all the rigour, consequences not withstanding.The gulf was too wide at once deterring and inviting.

Islamic Polity and Religion :

The necessity of understanding Islam or the religion preached and followed by Mohammedans in India is twofold. Firstly, one has to acquaint oneself with the broad principles and basic tenets of Islam in order to understand its intrinsic

values to mankind. Secondly one has to appreciate the great contrast between Islam and Hinduism, the two forces that clashed in India over a period of five centuries.

According to Islamic Law, the world was divided into the Dar-ul-Islam (abode or territory of Islam) and the Dar-ul-harb (abode or territory of war), in other words, Islam does not recognise the world beyond the territory of its own. And with all those who do not belong to this territory, Islam is perpetually at war according to Quranic injunctions. The territory of Islam correspond to the territory under Muslim rule. It's inhabitants were Muslims by birth or by conversion. The Dar-ul-harb consists of all the states and communities outside the world of Islam. The members of this territory are commonly referred to as non-belivers or infidels.

The Muslims, thus having divided mankind in two different camps proceeded on further assumption that principles of Islam had world-wide and eternal validity and the ultimate aim of Islam was world wide and all pervasive. In the early history of Islam we find that the Muslims were required to preach Islam by persuasion. The members of other religions had option to embrace Islam or as an alternative of paying 'Jizya'. The failure of the other communities to pay jizya to the Muslim State, made it necessary to declare a jihad on the recalcitrant individuals and communities. Thus the jihad became a perpetual and normal mode of relations between Muslims and non-Muslims. It soon became an instrument in the hands of the State for converting the Dar-ul-harb into the Dar-ul-Islam.

The doctrine of Jihad is terrible because of its simplicity. According to Muslim legal theory, Allah is the sole god and no other god exists in Islamic world. As such no god or deity could be allowed to co-exist with Allah-co-exist in the Islamic world. The preacher of Islam or Imam always propogated that the abode of non-believers is only hell and evil is their destination, therefore, all had to be brought to the right path. The jihad was considered a measure against

polytheism and must be suffered by all who reject Islam or who refuse to pay the poll tax. Simultaneously they recognised the existence of certain classes of people or communities preaching different religion as "tolerated religions", provided they pay Jizya (Poll Tax) to the Islamic rulers. And thus enjoy only partial or limited rights as compared to the Muslim subjects.

Jihad is also a form of punishment to be inflicted upon Islam's enemies and the renegades from the faith. Thus in Islam, the jihad is the 'bellum justum'[2] . When once jihad is accepted as a just means to carry out religious propaganda, it is permitted to make use of sword also.

The main principle on which jihad is based is the spread of Islam. Jihad is Islam's instrument for carrying out its ultimate objective by turning all people into believers. The existence of a dar-ul-harb is outlawed under the Islamic jural order, and the dar-ul-Islam is permanently under jihad obligation until Dar-ul-harb is reduced to no-existence. Any community which prefers to remain non-Islamic in the status of a 'tolerated religion and community' accepting certain disabilities must submit to Islamic rule and submit to reside in whatever rules are enforced or whatever changes are brought about from time to time. In order to achieve no-existence of non-believers jihad was made as one of the five articles of faith and declared as 'Fard ayn' like prayer of fasting. But none of the jurists of the later period made jihad a collective obligation of the Muslim community and an extremely pacifist sect known as the Maziyariyya dropped both the jihad against polytheists and fasting from the articles of faith.

The principle of jihad was made applicable to both individuals as well as communities and it became the duty of every able bodied Muslim to contribute to the spread of Islam. It was the divine monocratic basis on which imperialistic aspirations were to be fulfilled. Muslim religion combined in itself religion and politics, the dualism of an

universal religion and an universal state. It resorted to peaceful as well as violent means for achieving this ultimate objective. The universality of Islam provided a unifying element for all believers within the world of Islam. Its defensive-offensive character produces the state of permanent warfare against the (non-Islamic world) world of war. [3]

Jihad was a most powerful instrument in carrying out the spread of Islam. In addition to this. the Islamic state, which has always been considered a Military State, made it obligatory for its king or emperor, as commander of its soldiers to march them, i.e. followers of Islam against infidels. The king is usually referred to as the Silhouette of God (Zil-i-Subhani). The followers are told not to question his leadership. The basic principles of Islamic Government made it clear that the 'tolerated religions', have to pay poll tax as an alternative to conversion but they were not to have any rights of citizenship or any say in the functioning of the Governments. It becomes obvious then that the one aim of the Muslim Governments was to universalise their religion and thus uproot the dar-ul-harb from the map of the world.

Islamic law has thus legalized plundering and slaying of the non-believers as a consequence of jihad. This practice disputes the claim of some of Muslim jurists that the Islamic State was a nation or universal monocracy and that the appeal of Muhammad was not only to the Arabs alone but to the world at large. According to them "the legal prerequisites for a universal State were already recognized in the Quran, such as equality of all races before God and the common allegiance of all belivers to one head of the state." [4]

If this claim is considered to be true and legally sound, both in theory and practice it means that the Quran recognises the equality of other races before God, irrespective of their beliefs. No! the term "all belivers" is significant. All men, irrespective of faith or religious belief

they hold, or whicever race they might belong to were considered by the God Almighty as human beings only. Thus Muslim jurors, advance a claim in respect of Quranic law which was poles apart in practice.

If such was the intention of Quranic Law, then there would not have been any aggression against non-Muslims. The very fact that the Muslim law divided mankind into two distinct camps dar-ul-Islam and dar-ul-harb, made it obligatory for the followers of Islamic religion to wage war against non-Muslims till the latter were converted into the camp of belivers, shows beyond doubt that the Islamic religion refused any toleration, particularly in respect of the religious faith of other communities. This is evidenced by the practice of all the Muslim kings who supported their claim of religious expansions relentlessly and faithfully carried out their wars, caused destruction to mankind and proved to be far away from recognising the existence of other religions. This only goes against its ardent advocates that Muslim religion recognised equality of other races before God or another religion. "If there were two gods the universe would be ruined"[5] This is the Quranic injunction and the religious zealots have followed it to its extremity. But certain advocates of Muslim religion maintain that in theory the co-existence of a second universal state is not possible, though Islam tolerated Christianity and Juddism as religions. The claim is too superficial to be accepted, as every keen student of history knows, crusades continued between these religions for centuries. Even if we have to accept the statement, we will have to accept it with greater caution and limitation, as the Muslims, if ever they tolerated any other religion it was merely an outcome of chance and necessity as the followers of other religion were either more powerful or superior in number to them.

Similar has been the case in respect of Islam and Hinduism. The wars lasted for centuries together, for domination of Islam over the Hinduism. And if in the

history of religious expansion of Muslims in India, they showed any tolerance, it was merely a temporary arrangement, as either they lacked adequate force or numerical strength to overthorw the latter or the conditions were so adverse that nothing could have been achived by them, if they were to fight.

The Muslim state in Medieval India, during Sultanate period was as noted above, professing to be a Muslim state, yet ruling over a vast majority of Hindus and leaving them to their own ways.

With the firm establishment of Mughal rule in India under Akbar, we notice that Akbar reviewed and reconstructed his religious out look and policy towards the Hindus. The artificial discriminations between the Hindus and Muslims, which were being vigorously advocated by the Ulama, were discarded. This gave a great setback to the Muslim theologians of the period. The bonds of unity between the two religions were further strengthened when Akbar decided to abolish the jizya in 1564. He firmly implemented this policy inspite of strong opposition of the 'Ulama'. In the opinion of Abul Fazal'the benefits of Jizya were imaginery, its imposition tends to promote dissensions among the subjects.'[6]

Now let us examine the imposition of jizya under Jahangir, and Shah Jahan. During Akbar's reign also, the orthodox 'Ulama' firmly opposed Akbar's liberal policy of religious toleration. For Jahangir and Shah Jahan, the problem was to allay the opposition of orthodox elements, without however, abandoning Akbar's basic policy of keeping amicable relations with Rajput and other Hindu rulers. This could have been possible provided the state was willing to follow the broad principles of religious toleration towards the Hindus. Jahangir avoided giving open offence to the orthodox elements. During Shah Jahan's period, (early ten years of his reign), we notice that he proclaimed

himself 'a defender of the faith', and thus asserted the Islamic character of the state.
He ordered destruction of newly built temples of the Hindus and issued orders prohibiting Hindu-Muslim marriages. But at the same time he did not allow Ulama any say in the political affairs of the kingdom. Thus, Shah Jahan's out look and concept of the state was a step backward from the concept of Akbar as expounded by Abul Fazal. However, it did not go far enough to satisfy the Ulama either. As such his state policies were more dictated by political expediencies than any religious considerations. And therefore, we notice that, after the initial ten years period of his reign, there was a gradual shift in his stand, towards greater religious toleration. Though he did not make any amends to the orders he had issued earlier, but at the same time strict compliance was not insisted upon.

Thus the Muslim state in India during the Mughal period (up to the end of Shah Jahan's reign), professed to be a Muslim state, yet ruling over a vast majority of Hindus, with a more beneficial principle of toleration, harmony and concord.

Religious Policy of Aurangzeb :

However, Aurangzeb was an ardent follower of the orthodox tenets. He deemed it to be the mission of his life to make India an abode of Islam. He was an emperor and was backed with adequate resources both in manpower and material to put his ideas into practice. He claimed himself to be the chosen representative of God, who was entrusted to spread of law of God among the non-Muslims. He was an ardent devotee of Quran and followed its teaching to all its extremeties. He enforced jizya on Hindu population, demolished their places of worship, imposed new taxes and introduced many humiliating regulations against them. It will be worthwhile to study in details the measures he adopted against the Hindus during his reign in order to

understand the subsequent opposition he had to face by Jats, Sikhs, Rajputs, Marathas and Hindus in general.

'The reimposition of jizya by Aurangzeb in 1679 is generally regarded as a turning point in the history of the Mughal Empire in India and as marking the culmination of the spirit of religious bigotry which, in turn led to the alienation of the Rajputs, the Marahtas and the Hindu generally and hastened the disintegration of the Empire'.[7]

Imposition of Jizya and Land Tax

At this stage it would be profitable to understand what the jizya tax meant, in the early days of Islam. Jizya and land tax were imposed in the form of a collective tribute consisting of a fixed sum of money and a fixed amount of agricultural product.The Quran refers to "Kharaj (land tax) as an income tax favoured by God,"[8] and as far as poll tax the term in use was "jizya on the head" of every non-Muslim. If a Dhimmi or non-Muslim peasant became a Muslim he was freed of the jizya. The Dhimmi was constantly reminded that conversion would free him of the discriminatory poll tax for unbelief. The proceeds of these taxes were to constitute a permanent source of expenditure for the maintenance of the believers,[9] engaged in fighting against non-Muslims. But the refusal of payment of jizya according to the Hanafi School, is not a breach of obligation, because of their status of having been admitted as Dhimmis in dar-ul-Islam. "Those were to be treated gently and put in prison but not beaten, till the payment was made."[10]

Such was the origin and practice allowed by law of Islam in respect of imposition of jizya. Now let us examine how this measure worked under sultanat period and the Mughal Emperors like Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan. This is essential in order to understand the qualitative change it underwent, till Aurangzeb thought of reimposing the jizya.

It was in the reign of Firuz Tughluq that imposition of jizya on the Brahmins was enforced. Earlier Brahmins had

enjoyed exemption, not sanctioned by law. However, the other communities were allowed to undertake to pay for the Brahmins. Sikandar Lodi is credited with abolishing the pilgrimage tax as pilgrimage was considered 'unlawful'.

Almost all the Sultans showed an anxiety to follow a policy towards Hindus, which should bring them no discredit in the eyes of the exponents of the 'Law' but without loosing sight of political expediency of the situation. Jizya was levied on all able bodied Hindus as a capitulation tax. Besides jizya, in respect of levying other taxes etc. sultan's attitude was quite flexible. He did not necessarily follow the rigid Shar'ia, but introduced suitable deviations, wherever necessary. Pilgrimage and religious fairs seem to have been usually permitted on payment of the pilgrimage tax. Places of Hindu worship were let alone, except when they were desecrated after the first conquest on occupation of a territory.[11] No attempt seems to have been made during Sultanat period and till Shah Jahan's reign under the Mughal emperors at enforcing a distinctive dress on the Hindus. The Hindus built new temples and the old ones were continually repaired. Under Ala-ud-Din Khilji, the Hindus were admitted in large numbers as public servants.[12] Painting and architecture in India were both enriched by the introduction of new media and the execution of new types of work. Dancing and music were kept alive by royal patronage.[13]

For more than a century the Mughal empire gave peace, law and order to the citizens of India. The discriminatory laws against the Hindus followed by the preceding Muslim rulers were set aside. It rendered to citizens of all classes an almost equal opportunity in its service. But Aurangzeb went back on many of the principles and practices which had created a natural harmony between the rulers and the ruled. He thus tried to tread his way back to a more orthodox type of state. He onee again divided Mughal subjects into two distinct classes, viz. Muslim and non-Muslims. To Hindus, who formed the majority of his subjects he accorded an

inferior status. He adopted many humuliating measures against them, and reimposition of jizya perhaps formed a foremost measure. According to Khafi Khan, and Mamuri, jizya was introduced in order to distinguish dar-ul-harb (abode or territory of infidels) from dar-ul-Islam (abode or territory of Islam). The 'Ulama' and the Qazis assumed airs which they had not been allowed under the predecessors of Aurangzeb for a century or so. Aurangzeb thus accepted the policy to assert the fundamentally Islamic character of state by formally proclaiming himself a defender of the true faith, by introducing several measures against the Hindus and prohibited all the heretical practices.

This break with the past and his subjects greatly contributed to disturbing the balance of the Mughal empire.

"About the middle of his reign he (Aurangzeb) decided to levy jizya tax on the Hindus, as ordained by the Shar'ia and it was enforced through out his empire and a rare piece of excellence (Hasnat-i-gharib) had not been done in Hindustan and the Hindus had not been degraded to such a degree in any other period."[14] These are the words coming from Saqi Must'ad Khan as official historian of Aurangzeb's reign, having had access to official papers, therefore needless to say, must be trusted. The author magnifying the point adds further 'as all the aims of the religious Emperor were directed to the spreading of the law of Islam and the over throw of the practice of the infidels, he issued orders to the high diwani officers that from Wednesday, Rabi I, 1090, (the 2nd April 1679) in obedience to the Quranic injunction till they pay commutation money (Jizya) with the hand in humility and in agreement with the canonical traditions, jizya should be collected from the infidels (Dhimmis) of the capital and the provinces, [15] The two other historians of the period viz. Ishwardas Nagar and Ali Muhammad Khan are said to have expressed similar views about Aurangzeb's reimposition of jizya. 'The theologians, the learned men, and the traditionalists in view of regard of the Emperor' says

Ishwardas Nagar' ..... representated to him that the levying of jizya was necessary and compulsory according to Shar'ia'.[16] Ali Murad Khan has expressed his views thus : 'Since his majesty was inclined to promote the faith and give currency to the laws of Shar'ia,rejecting all things contrary to Shar'ia in the fixing up of expenses and in all matters, at this auspicious moment, the learned men, the theologians and the saintly persons, in view of his regard for the faith represented to the Emperor, that the levying of jizya upon the opponents of the (true) faith was compulsory according toShar'iaand urged him to reimpose it in the provinces of the Empire'.[17]

From the above statements it is clear that, whether at the instigation of theologians, learned men or otherwise, Aurangzeb decided to reimpose jizya with all the vigour and dynamism. It is immaterial whether it took twenty two years or more for him to take the decision since his accession. The fact remains that the dire consequences that followed could not have been escaped even had this decision been taken a little earlier or a little later. Some modern historians believe that this decision was an outcome of financial crises in the Empire and the motivies were more in favour of improving the economic condition of the state and thus lesser importance should be attached to its religious aspect. It is not intended here to dispute the motives of Aurangzeb behind levying jizya, but the outcome it represented, to the Mughal Empire and its subjects. This was indeed a regressive tax. The poor class of the society was completely squeezed, the middle class humilated and was made to feel the status of second class citizens. It proved to be a very oppressive measure employed forcibly in converting the poorer class of the Hindu society. The poorest but an able bodied person was required to pay three rupees and five annas as jizya every year. The only option open to him if ever he desired to escape it, was by embracing Islam alone.

The jizya was oppressive. The other measure of

Aurangzeb, that of wholesale destruction of temples was provocative.

Destruction of temples :

"Generally speaking, the Law (Islamic) provides that Muslim authorities must guarantee the security of lives, property, churches, crosses, and other religious rites and practices of dhimmis, provided they do not build new churches or display their crosses and pray or ring their church bells loudly."[18] Such was the Islamic Law but the Muslim rulers in India hardly showed any regard for it.

In 1455, a certain Muslim saint Changal came to India from Mecca and destroyed many idols of the Hindus.[19] In another instance we find the Muslims destroyed twenty seven temples of the Hindus on which the Hindus had spent twenty lac Delhi-vals (a coin) in order to construct Quwat-ul-Islam mosque of Delhi.[20] In Maharashtra, in 1458, a certain Muhammad Zaman constructed a mosque at Ghodegaon (then called Kharababad), on the stone inscription, it is mentioned with pride that the mosque was constructed after the destruction of thirty three temples of the Hindus.[21]

Though the Holy Quran has forbidden its followers from committing any such acts, yet the zealots of Muslim religion carried out the job with perfect enthusism. It is these types of practices in the name of religion that basically brought about the clash between Hindus and Muslims. The climax was reached in the reign of Aurangzeb. "Large numbers of places of worship of infidels and great temples of these wicked people have been thrown down and isolated. Men who can see only the outside of the things are filled with wonder at the successful accomplishment of such a seemingly difficult task. And on the sites of the temples lofty mosques have been built."[22] What was the crime of these innocent people who erected temples and against whom such destructive measures were launched? Was it that they belonged to a different faith, and observed a different

religion than their ruler? Was this a sufficient cause for such type of destructive measures? The chronicles of the period speak that certain men violated Islamic Law therefore Aurangzeb embarked upon the militant policy of destruction of temples. It would be worth while going into some details about the implementation of this measure by Aurangzeb, in order to understand its real impact from a common man's point of view.

In 1669, Aurangzeb issued orders to destory the temples of the Hindus, particularly those at Banaras and their places of learnings.[23] On 3rd August 1669, news of destruction of the temple of Kasi Visvanath was received.[24] In 1670,i.e., in the 13th year of his reign, Aurangzeb ordered destruction of Kesho Raye's temple in Mathura and construction of a mosque in its place.[25]

In the first half of the year 1672 government agents were sent to all parganas with orders to carry out destruction of all Hindu temples.

In October-November 1678, Darab Khan took leave of Aurangzeb in order to destroy the temples of Rajputs in Khandel. He reached Khandel on 8th March 1679. He killed many Rajputs and destroyed their temples.[26] On 25th May 1679 Khan-i-Jahan Bahadur after destroying the temples at Jodhpur brought the idols from these temples to Aurangzeb at Delhi. He was rewarded and was ordered to place these idols in open space as well as under the steps of Jama Masjid so that they would be always trampled under Muslim feet.[27]

On January 5th 1680 Ruhullah Khan and Yakkataj Khan who were in Udaipur went to destroy a temple over there. About twenty Rajputs bravely resisted them. But the fight was in vain. At least the idols of the Hindu were destroyed.[28] On 13th January 1681 Aurangzeb went to see the tank named Udaya Sagar and ordered all the temples there to be destroyed.[29] On 29th January 1681 Hasan Ali Khan petitioned Aurangzeb that a temple in front of the palace of

the Rana (Udaipur) and 172 other temples in Udaipur district were destroyed by him.[30] In appreciation of his work he was awarded the title of Bahadur Alamgir Shah. On 10th February 1681 Aurangzeb went to see Chitod and there he destroyed 63 temples of the Hindus.[31] On 28th May 1681 a temple at Islamabad was destroyed. In June, Amir-ul-Umra of Bengal was ordered to destroy temples of Jagannath.[32] On 30th July 1681 a certain Abut Rao who had gone to Amber destroyed 66 temples there. No resistence of any kind was offered. On 1st February 1683, Prince Muhammad Aazam was ordered to destroy temple of Mahadeo near Satara.[33]

Aurangzeb made an appointment of a special officer to supervise the destruction of Hindu temples in Maharashtra.[34] In October 1689, he issued orders to destroy all the temples of the Hindus in Karnataka. On receiving the news the local ruler made arrangements to keep more army in readiness in order to fight the approaching aggression.[35] In November 1693, Sankar, a messenger, was sent to demolish a temple near Sheogaon, he came back after putting it down.[36] In April of the following year, idol worship was prevented in Jaisingpura near Aurangabad. The priests of the temple were arrested but soon rescued by the Rajputs. In 1705, January, orders were issued to desecrate and demolish temple at Purandhar. The temple in Wagingera fort was demolished in March 1705. These are a few instances where dates and details are available in the chronicles. But there are hundreds of instances of Aurangzeb's reign where the dates are not available. In short Aurangzeb launched an unprovoked attack on the temples of the Hindus, demolished them and erected mosques in their places.[37] Therefore could these actions of Aurangzeb be understood or interpreted as extension of Quranic intolerence or a means of political pressurisation?

Forced Conversions

If one of the two earlier measures were oppressive and other

provocative, Aurangzeb's third measure was revolting. Nothing would have roused resistence from the Hindus as surely as this measure. It was forced conversions. As an ardent devotee of Islam, Aurangzeb believed in converting non-Muslims to Islamic faith, the dar-ul-harb into dar-ul-Islam. And in achieving this end he did not leave a single stone unturned. The most controversial method which was adopted by him in carrying out the spread of Islam was forced conversions. The official machinery was engaged in executing the scheme. Instances of such conversions are numerous. The author duly intends giving some of them in order to highlight the emphasis that was laid by Aurangzeb on this aspect of spread of Islam.

In the tenth year of Aurangzeb's reign Kondaji uncle of Netaji Palkar was converted. Netaji was also converted and named Muhammad Quli Khan.On 17th November 1661 Raja Rup Singh's daughter who was converted to Islam was married to prince Muhammad Aazam.[38] In 1676 Bai Bhupad the daughter of Raja of Kistawar was married to Muhammad Sultan.[39] On 14th August 1680 Darbar Khan was ordered to keep under his watch the women and children of Yaval village and thirty-five men were handed over to I'htsham Khan in order to convert them and teach them prayer.[40] On 6th September 1680 Gharibdas and Rai Singh sent by Man singh became Musalman. They were rewarded two thousand rupees each.[41] On 9th June 1681 Rao Jagat Singh Manoharpuri's sister Kalyan Kuar was converted and renamed Jani-ul-Nisa Begum and was given two hundred rupees per month.[42] On 14th December 1682 Kartalab Khan who had captured forty-five men of Sambhaji was ordered to let go those who accepted Islam. Accordingly thirty-two men were converted and thirteen men were killed as they refused to be converted.[43] On 31st July 1683 Bahari and other of Mahdi tribe were converted.[44] On 7th April 1685 Aurangzeb stopped the practice of paying rupees four to a male and rupees two to a female as a price for their conversion to Islam.[45] In 1686 a certain Gangadhar

Rangnath Kulkarni, who was forcibly converted and had stayed in the Mughal service requested Maratha King Sambhaji to take him back into the Hindu fold. Accordingly, Sambhaji issued the orders.[46] On 21st April 1686, at midnight, Khwaja Abdul Rahim Khan, brought the two sons of Lahchal (Lalchand), the brother of Ram Rai, who was the Munshi of Fazil Khan.

Both of them were converted and named Sa'dat-ullah and Shadullah.[47] In 1693, Bala Patil, Venkata Agri and Dharmaji Panvelkar were reconverted to Hinduism.[48] In 1700 two Maratha sardars, Khanderao and Jagjivanrao Gujar were made prisoners and later on converted. Several converts are mentioned in the news letters of the period. On 28th February 1702 we find a certain Hindu, whose converted name Ghulam Muhammad is only known. On 9th March, Balla; on 12th June, Narayan, on 17th November, a Maratha Deshmukh and a Hindu Chaudhri and a certain Dinkar were converted.[49] Maratha prisoners occasionally provided the material for conversion. After the death of Sambhaji, his daughter who was in Aurangzeb's captivity was forcibly converted and was married to Faqir Muhammad. Similarly, a daughter of Raja Ram the Maratha king was married to Shamsher Beg. Orphans were all converted to Islam. Thus there were individual and mass conversions, throughout Aurangzeb's reign.

Such were the political and religious conditions prevailing in india under Aurangzeb. His rebel son prince Muhammad Akbar has given very honest account of Aurangzeb's treatment of his Hindu subjects. "From the beginning of his (Aurangzeb's) reign" says prince Akbar "it was the intention of Alamgir to utterly ruin all the Hindus alike. On the death of Maharajah Jaswant Singh this intention became revealed to all. His war with the Raja (Raj Singh of Udaipur) was also the outcome of this design.... As all men are the creation of God and He is the protector of them all, it is not proper for us as Emperors of India to try to uproot the race

of land owners for whom is India. Emperor Alamgir had carried matters beyond their limits."[50] On another occasion, the prince is more fervent in exposing the situation. "In your Majesty's reign" the prince goes on describing the condition of the people, "the ministers have no power, the nobles enjoy no trust, the soldiers are wretchedly poor, the writers (Hindu) are without employment, and traders are without means. The peasantry are down trodden ... On the Hindu tribe, two calamities have descended, (first) the exaction of jizya in the towns and (second) the oppression of the enemy in the country (i.e. that of the Marathas).[51]

Therefore, as a strong reaction, we notice the Marathas rising in arms firstly under Shivaji, and then under his successor kings like Sambhaji, Rajaram and Shivaji II.

It is one of the many coincidences of history that make human life so worth living, that almost simultaneously with Aurangzeb, a new force was coming into its own in the Deccan. The Deccan was under the heel of the Islamic rulers for nearly three centuries. The rivalry between the five sultanats that succeeded the Bahmanis afforded ample opportunity to the local landed gentry to play an important role in the political life of the time. Excellent use of this was made by many people, amongst whom was Shahaji Bhosale. His son Shivaji, had at an early age formed a distaste for alien rule, had geared the power of the local landlords and soldiers and had started building up a movement of resistance. It was not long before he realised that the danger was not of alien rule alone but of alien religion as well, his land and his religion became the rallying point.

Aurangzeb's designs ran directly counter to Shivaji's ideals. Their conflict was inevitable, sooner or later.

The ideology of 'Swaraj' i.e. self goverment was soon evolved and vigorously persued. It was complemented by the concept of 'Maharahstra dharma' a politico-social doctrine

aimed at unifying the Marathas, to fight the political and social aggression of the alien rulers. The Maratha kings like Sambhaji and Rajaram made a fervent appeal to the high and low in the name of Maharashtra dharma, to make an united effort in protecting the land of the Marathas from Aurangzeb's aggression. Several letters are extant today, written by Rajaram to various nobles in the name of Maharashtra dharma which are eloquent in expressing the ethos.

Rajaram, the Maratha king considered himself in a subordinate position, and expressed the desire that the people were the real holders of the power and prestige of the kingdom.[52] Therefore the people had to strive for its existence, they had to protect it against any external danger. He appealed to the sentiments and feeling of his subjects, inorder to join his war efforts. Thus they were asked to take up arms in order to protect their sacred kingdom, a kingdom symbolic of gods, purity and humanity.[53]

Therefore, we notice during this period of struggle, people were being enthused to unite in the name of Maharashtra dharma. This proved to be a magnetic force attracting all the people in maharashtra under one banner and for the singular cause of Maharashtra Rajya, synonimous of 'Swaraj'.

The contemporary records speak most eloquently about this strong and underlying unifying force. On several occasions we come across such expressions as 'this kingdom is the kingdom of God and Brahmans. To establish dharma is the foremost duty of the king'[54] or 'this Maharashtra Rajya is the kingdom of you people. You must always strive for this kingdom. In that way alone you will prosper."[55]

The impact of this appeal on the people was great. It proved to be a great factor in uniting the people. The people displayed their unflinching loyalty to the cause of Swaraj and Maharashtra dharma. They gave determined opposition to the Mughal soldiers, throughout the period of twenty five

years, at all places in a town and in a village alike. In the real sense of the word it became a people's war. The Mughal army and their Emperor, both were astonished at the consistent and stiff opposition offered to them from every nook and corner of land of Maharashtra.

Thus the struggling Marathas "not only outlived opposition but derived greater strength from the reverses it sustained from time to time, rising Phoenix-like in greater splendour from the very ashes of its apparent ruin."[56]

Part II

Mughal - Maratha Relations - Backdrop

Among the first to come in conflict with the Mughals during the time of Aurangzeb were the Jats, who rose in rebellion in Mathura in 1669. This is ascribed to the religious persecution and oppression of local faujdars. Then there was Satnami uprising in 1672.[57] Saqi Must'ad Khan ridicules it by describing it as "a gang of bloody miserable rebels, goldsmiths, carpenters, sweepers, tanners and other ignoble being who have wilfully chosen to walk in to the trap of their destruction." However, it is wellknown that the facts are not that straight as described by the official biographer of Aurangzeb. The clash between Aurangzeb and the Sikhs began in 1675 with the execution of Guru Tegh Bahadur. Under the leadership of Guru Govind, the uprising developed into an attempt to set up a Sikh state in the Punjab. The repurcussions of these bold activities were shortlived as neither the Jat uprising nor the Sikh attempt to found an independent state, posed a serious threat to the Mughal Empire. However, these incidents displayed a growing spirit of resistance and assertiveness by various sections and communities. 'These movements adversely affected the Imperial prestige and were apparently regarded by Aurangzeb as part and parcel of Hindu disaffection against the state .... Hence they tended to accentuate the general spirit of animosity and discord between sections of Hindu and Muslim Communities.'[58]

The more disturbing factor from the point of view of Mughal empire, was the rise of Maratha community in the Deccan. The power and influence of the Marathas had steadily grown in the politics of the Deccani States during the seventeenth century. During Shah Jahan's period, Shahaji Bhosale had been acclaimed as a great mansabdar and a leader of the Marathas. His fame as a king-maker could not

but caused uneasiness in the minds of the Lords of Delhi. His illustrious son Shivaji, inherited small jagir of his father in and around Poona. After successfully defying the Adil Shahi Government, he clashed with the Mughals. The first armed clash between the Mughals and the Marathas took place when Shivaji made a bold attack on Junnar, a prominent Mughal post in the Deccan. The Mughal officers took cognizance of it but did not consider it to be a very serious challenge to the Mughal power and prestige in the Deccan. However, in 1658, Aurangzeb after his conquest of Kalyani, and on his way back to North India, wrote to Adil Shah to keep Shivaji in check. Soon he himself decided to act and sent his famous generals Jai Singh and Diler Khan to the Deccan to chastise Shivaji. By 1665 Jai Singh, by treaty of Purandar, forced Shivaji to surrender to the Mughals twenty three forts and surrounding region yielding an annual revenue of four lacs hons. With this Shivaji was left with a bare twelve forts and was obliged to pay a visit to the Emperor at Agra. But Aurangzeb did not seem to be contended with this outcome of Jai Singh's campaign. However, Jai Singh's policy of moderation towards Shivaji was framed mainly with the view to use Shivaji against Adil Shah virtually as a Mughal sentinal in Deccan.

Here we notice that in the opinion of Jai Singh, submission of Shivaji or subduing the Marathas was not an exclusive problem. He did not wish to treat the problem of the Marathas in isolation from the Deccan problem. He therefore recommended to Aurangzeb that Shivaji be treated moderately. His sole intention was to make use of Shivaji against the Bijapuri king, as long as it suited the Mughal emperor. Aurangzeb, therefore agreed to grant part of Talkonkan (taken over from the Adil Shahis) to Shivaji and also Bijapuri Balaghat. The territories so granted to Shivaji, were expected to yield an annual revenue of nine lacs hons.[59] This agreement, in the opinion of Jai Singh was sufficient to alienate Shivaji from Bijapur. Therefore Treaty of Purandar

has been aptly described by Prof. Sarkar as a Mughal-Maratha agreement for partition of Bijapuri kingdom. But Jai Singh knew it very well that his master (Aurangzeb) would never trust him,. therefore he assured Aurangzeb in explicit terms that "the intention (niyat) and resolution (irada) of your slave had been bent on this : to erase the portrait of his (i.e.Shivaji's) existence from the tablet of Time. But inspite of the resources and equipments which were available there it required opportunity and time for displacing him, in driving him out of that land and effecting the conqest of all these difficult forts".[60]

"Thus the Treaty of Purandar was neither a mere imposition of the victor on the vanquished, nor the result of mere imperial military might, but clearly the outcome of diplomacy of Jai Singh ... a bargain between the two after a prolonged negotiations. But the wisdom of Jai Singh's advice was wasted on his suspecious master. Indeed if Aurangzeb had treated Shivaji subsequently in a way different from what he actually did, the course of history would have been different."[61]

Shivaji faithfully carried out his promises. He helped Jai Singh wholeheartedly in his campaigns against Bijapuris. Thus for time being he earned favour of Jai Singh and Aurangzeb. But due to his failure in the campaign of Panhala against Bijapuris, Jai Singh thought it appropriate to remove Shivaji from the Deccan for sometime at least. Therefore he wrote to Aurangzeb, 'Now that Adil Shah and Qutb Shah have united in mischief, it is necessary to win Shivaji's heart by all means and send him to North India to have audience of Your Majesty'.[62] Therefore with the consent of Aurangzeb, Shivaji was induced to pay a visit to Aurangzeb at Agra.

What was this 'dangling carrot' which attracted Shivaji so much and due to which Shivaji decided to visit Aurangzeb risking his life? There are no records to show the exact

nature of it. Was it the viceroyalty of the Deccan? or probability of getting impregnable fort of Janjira on the sea coast from the Sidis or 'a thousand devices', used by Jai Singh which succeeded in inducing Shivaji to visit Agra, there is no definite evidence on record.

But whatever might have been the motives regarding Shivaji's visit to Aurangzeb at Agra, it proved to be a turning point in the Mughal-Maratha relations. It proved to be an event of far-reaching consequence to both, the Mughals and the Marathas. "....this event marks a decisive turning point in the history of India as a whole..." [63]

At Agra Shivaji was ill-treated by Aurangzeb and subsequently the sinister design of Aurangzeb to do away with the Maratha leader, Shivaji's visit to the Mughal court turned into a tragedy. It is not necessary for us to go into the details of Agra episode, but suffice it to say that, the policy outlined by that great and matured general, Jai Singh, towards Shivaji and the newly growing state of Marathas, viz. to curtail its independent growth and to turn Shivaji into a faithful ally of the Mughals, received a great set back. The trust required to build up mutual healthy relations was the first casuality of this tragic event, Suspecion, distrust and mutual hatred to some extent took its place. And this became the common theme of Mughal-Maratha relations for next three decades to follow.

Shivaji on his successful return to Maharashtra, noticed that the political situation in the Deccan had undergone a total change. Jai Singh had passed away in August 1667. Muazzam's appointment as viceroy of the Deccan relieved Shivaji of all fear of any fresh attack by the Mughals. In fact this chage in viceroyalty of the Deccan showed that Aurangzeb was not keen to take any strong measures against Shivaji. Not only this but concilatory steps, promoted to bring about an amicable understanding with Shivaji proposed by the new viceroy of the Deccan, were viewed sympathetically by Aurangzeb. This was indeed a major

chage in the Mughal policy towards the Marathas, since Agra debacle. Inturn, Shivaji persued a friendly but cautious policy towards the Mughals (1667-70), and did not give any fresh provocation to the Mughals.

As a result of this, on the recommendations of prince Mu'azzam and Jaswant Singh, Shivaji was honoured with the title of Rajah and his son Sambhaji was created a mansabdar of five thousand. Thus Shivaji and the Mughal Viceroy chose to live in peace for the time being at least. But the Mughals were far from sincere. During the year 1669, they secretly planned an attack on Talkonkan, falling under Shivaji. This was to be executed under the command of Jaswant Singh.[64] Shivaji's spies brought the intelligence of the proposed attack as well as the news of likely arrest of his son who was at Aurangabad with the Mughal Viceroy. Before taking any bold steps Shivaji ensured the safe return of Sambhaji and his general Pratap Rao.

Subsequent to this he made a pre-emptive bid and opened an offensive with great vigour in the Mughal territory. It was followed by immeasurable success. This breach with the Mughals occured in January 1670. He captured Kalyan, Bhivandi, Mahuli, Kondana and most of the forts ceded to the Mughal's by the treaty of Purandar. He plundered Surat for the second time (October, 1670), captured Ahiwant, Makrand, Ravala and Javala forts. He defeated Daud Khan in the battle of Dindori and took possession of fort of Trimbak. Hardly any resistance was offered by the Mughals. In the beginning of the following year Salher was captured by the Marathas (January 1671). The Mughals could hardly defend themselves against such systematic attacks combined with speed and surprise by Shivaji and his soldiers. These series of failures of Mughal generals against Shivaji, led Aurangzeb to suspect them of collusion with Shivaji. This was true about, Jai Singh, Jaswant Singh, Mahabat Khan and even Prince Mu'azzam.

In 1671-72 Shivaji's generals like Prataprao, Anand Rao

and Moro Pant, defeated and wounded Ikhalas Khan and Muhakkam Singh. Many Mughal officers including Rao Amar Singh Chandravat were killed. Thus they achieved singular success against the Mughal army in Baglana. It was followed by the capture of Mulher fort. This greatly enhanced Shivaji's power and prestige. Infact it became almost impossible for the Mughal goverment to recover their position in the face of continuous warfare against the Marathas.

In December 1672 the Marathas boldly carried out raids in Nasik, defeated the Mughal thanedar of Vani-Dindori. The Marathas were active in Nanded and Beed districts. But the Mughals successfully checked their inroads and free march in to Berar and Khandesh (1673).

In January 1674 the Mughal army tried to invade Konkan but Shivaji defeated their plans.

In the North, Aurangzeb had to meet a serious challenge from the Khaibar Afghans. Therefore Diler Khan was called back to the capital. Bahadur Khan alone was left in the Deccan with a fairly weak and weary army.

In July 1674, Bahadur Khan's camp at Pedgaon was attacked and looted. From there the Maratha force proceeded to Aurangabad, looted several towns in the vicinity and by November-December, dashed into Baglana and Khandesh.

Then Shivaji opened negotiations with Bahadur Khan (March-May 1675), gave a false promise to cede some seventeen forts to the Mughals. Bahadur Khan persuaded Aurangzeb to issue necessary farman, pardoning Shivaji's offences etc. But Shivaji eluded him and thus the peace talks were broken. Immediatley Bahadur Khan launched several attacks in the Konkan territory. These attacks of Bahadur Khan strained Mughal-Maratha relations. Aurangzeb's efforts and hopes were washed away with the failure of Bahadur Khan's negotiations. Further, Shivaji's determined

effort to establish a Maratha kingdom in alliance with Golkonda and his virtual assumption of the mantle of being the defender of the Deccani states against the Mughals, perhaps drove Aurangzeb to take more stern measures against Shivaji.

There was the potential danger of dissolution of the two Islamic states of the Deccan, therefore, Aurangzeb perhaps resolved in order to keep the situation under control, upon a policy of all out expansion of the Mughal Empire to the extreme ends of Southern India.

'He thus abandoned the policy of limited encroachments which the Mughals had pursued since the days of Akbar and which had been the policy of Shah Jahan in his settlement of 1636, and Aurangzeb's own policy since his accession.'[65] His policy of winning over the two Muslim States of the Deccan also failed. instead, the sultan of Golkonda walked clean in to the folds of Shivaji. Thus the Mughals failed to achieve even this limited objective. The death of Shivaji in 1680, provided an opportunity for the Mughal emperor to improve the political situation in the Deccan in his favour. But hardly it was exploited.

In November 1680, Sambhaji the successor to Shivaji's throne launched an open attack on the Mughal territory of Burhanpur. Thus the Mughal-Maratha relations were totally raptured. In 1681,Sambhaji gave political asylum to prince Muhammad Akbar the rebel son of Emperor Aurangzeb. This perhaps proved to be the last straw to break the camel's back. As a direct consequence of it Aurangzeb decided to march with his armies against the Maratha ruler. This proved to be a point of no return in the Mughal-Maratha relations.

NOTES

1. Quran, XXIX, 5,6.
2. WPLI, p.57.
3. ibid, pp.63-64.
4. ibid, p.17. The views expressed here are based on the interpretation of Quran, as offered by Prof. Majid Khadduri, an authority on Islamic studies.
5. Quran, XXI, 22,23.
6. Abul Fazal, Akbarnama, Beveridge, II, pp.316-17.
7. Satish Chandra, 'Jizyah and the State in India during the 17th century,' *Journal Of The Economic & Social History Of The Orient* Vol. XII, Pt. III, p. 323, 1969.
8. Quran, XXIII, 74, as quoted by the author of WPLI, p.190.
9. WPLI, pp. 125-126
10. ibid, pp.195-96.
11. Futhuh-ul-Buldan, II, p.190 records, according to Firishta (p.187) that Muhammad bin Qasim allowed the old temples to stand.
12. Afif, Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi, p.217
13. Zia-ud-din Barni.
14. MA, p.529.
15. ibid, p.174
16. Ishwardas Nagar. Fatuhat-i-Alamgiri F 749.
17. Mirat-i-Ahmadi i, 296.
18. WPLI, p.195.
19. Epi. Indo.Mos. 1909-10, PSIH, Vol.I, p.2.
20. ibid, PSIH, Vol.I, p.13.
21. ibid, pp.93-96.
22. MA, p.528
23. ibid, p.81.
24. ibid, p.88.
25. ibid, p.95.
26. ibid, p.173.
27. ibid, p.175.
28. ibid, pp. 188-89.
29. MA, p.188
30. ibid, p.189.
31. ibid
31. Akh. J.24, Jamadi I, 23.
33. Akh. J.26, Safar 13.
34. RPME, p.148
35. HS, p.235.

36. RPME, p.147. In 1696, Cows were slaughtered in the 'Vithala' temple at pandharpur, on the orders of Aurangzeb.
37. MA p.37. The only known exceptions, in respect of which Aurangzeb continued old sanads were Chinchwad and Mahur temples.
38. MA, p.37
39. ibid, p.148
40. Akh. J.23, Rajab 3.
41. Akh. J.23, Shaban 22.
42. Akh. J.24, Jamadi II,2.
43. Akh. J.26, Jihizzah, 24.
44. Akh. J.27, Shaban,27.
45. Akh. J.28, Jamadi I, 12.
46. SKPS No. 189, p.63.
47. MA, pp.273-74.
48. SCS. Vol.IX, No.83, p.86
49. RPME, p.182, Sri Ram Sharma, author of Religious policy of Mughal Emperors, has cited long lists of converts etc.
50. HS, pp.103-4.
51. Khutut-i-Shivaji No.15, pp.100-01. 1933. (English translation, Aurangzeb's Reign).
52. SCS, Vol.IV, No.726, pp.78-79.
53. SCS, Vol.V,No.767, pp.10-11.
54. SSK, No.88, pp.141-42 also see, SCS, Vol.V No. 827, p.66, SSK.No.82, p.133, No.86 p.139, No.80, p.130 and No.84, p.136.
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59. MDG, pp.16-17.
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61. ibid, p.19.
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63. SHT, p.138, 3rd ed.
64. Shivaji-Mughal Relations (1669-80), pp.336-42. Proceedings of IHC, Waltair, 1979.
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1. Sambhaji and the Mughals (1680-1689): The Crisis Begins

Prologue

The third day of April of the year 1680 marked the close of an era. On that day passed away a man who rose from comparative obscurity to the great heights of power and prestige. Shivaji, the illustrious son of Shahaji Bhosale, 'Shivaji the Great' as he is rightly called, breathed his last, after an eventful life of fifty years. During these fifty years he gave independence to the people of his land, revitalized their age-old religion and enabled them to practice it freely. He enthused fresh confidence and courage in the Maratha nation. He gave his people a new set of values along with progressive outlook. Above all he imparted to them a new sense of purpose.

As the later events were to prove, imbibing 'sense of purpose' on the minds of the Marathas was his greatest and most enduring contribution to the life of the Marathas-indeed of the Indians as a whole. For within a few months of his departure, the kingdom he had established was in shambles; remorseless repressions took the place of freedom and for a brief moment it appeared that everything was lost. The hands of the clock were as if, set back by fifty years. But if Shivaji the person departed from this land on this day, Shivaji the spirit continued to inform his people and enabled them to launch a massive struggle for reassertion of their independence.

The succeeding pages present a narrative-someetimes disjointed, at others cogent, of the struggle of the Marathas

with the Mughal power, a struggle of a popular endeavour, of this 'reincarnation' of the fierce spirit of independence of which Shivaji was the very incarnation.

The Mughal-Maratha relations spread over a period of twenty five years (1682-1707), are nothing but a series of continuous warfare. It is a long and enduring story of the Marathas resisting the aggression and occupation of their homeland by the Mughal soldiers and officers. The entire period of twenty five years of Aurangzeb's stay in the Deccan is full with mounting tensions of war, fighting, killing and the woes and sorrows of the people, which is usually followed by such a situation. The news-reports or akhabarat of Aurangzeb's court furnish us with several new battles, attacks, defeats and victories of the Mughal soldiers. On most of the occasions, according to these news-reports, the Marathas were defeated, killed or wounded and their territory or the forts successfully occupied by the Mughal soldiers. This needs rigorous examination as the same is not borne out by the facts, particularly such statements as 'all the Mughal soldiers are killed, but due to the good fortune of the Emperor, the victory is of the Emperor'. Obviously the news-writer wanted to conceal the reported defeat from the Emperor and thus had chosen a more pleasing way of reporting, as mentioned earlier. Therefore wherever such statements occur, in the text, we have to accept them with caution and interpret the same in the correct context and with proper understanding of the situation.

This is not the first time that an account of these events is narrated nor would it be the last. But the sources utilized here have been so used for the first time and to that extent they add to our knowledge of this period. It can be readily conceded that the documents used here do not bring to light any incident of extraordinary dimensions, but it has to be emphasised that they tell many more things about many more incidents. They thus afford a greater insight into the actions and thoughts of numerous people, big and small,

who participated in these events. Their aspirations, their fears, their compulsions stand better revealed, enabling us to appreciate and to understand why it happened in a particular manner. The documents examined here make it more evident than before that this was a 'peoples war' in a very real sense of the term.

At times the narrative may appear like a chain of events loosely bound together with a bare thread of chronology of the period. At places perhaps less coherent and more disjointed. This has mainly happened because the source material at the disposal is not a coherent narrative moving along with main actors of the drama viz. Aurangzeb and the kings of the Marathas. The news-reports covering the events of the period intermitantly are but small disjointed pieces of hapenings recorded at various places and at various times. Letters, entries, correspondence between the prominent personalities, notings by lesser known men at various places have greatly contributed the compilation of the narrative. The writings of the Muslim historians could not have been expected to be very balanced and impartial. Their narrations are mainly centred around their hero viz. the Emperor Aurangzeb. Therefore all this had to be scanned properly in order to arrive at a balanced judgement of the historical events. On the Maratha side, the available archival material or documents pertaining to the contemporary period, do not seem to be guided by a single individual according to a well thought out plan. They were the result of independence of action allowed, of individual initiative and of a spirit of resistance and assertion. Therefore the thread that binds the events together is neither an individual nor a predetermined plan, but a spirit. It found expression in various ways, manners and varying degrees of success or failure.

1 Swaraj Or The Maratha State Under Shivaji

How big was the State of the Marathas founded by Shivaji? What were its geographical boundaries? We do not have any

definite answers to these questions, as extant contemporary documents do not throw sufficient light on them. In fact, official documents of Shivaji's period are silent about them. It is only with the turn of the seventeenth century and the end of a decade and half of the eighteenth century that we come across about some official documents which help us in defining the boundaries of Shivaji's Swaraj.

The kingdom of the Marathas or the territory of Swaraj, at the time of Shivaji's death (April 1680) which Sambhaji inherited, comprised of twentynine subas in Maharashtra proper; besides these, eight subas of Karnataka and the territory of Jinji (Tanjore) on the East coast were also the parts of it. The territory in Maharashtra proper had two broad divisions, i.e. the territories falling under the geographical division of Konkan, and the territories falling under Varghat (the regions above the ghats or uplands), commonly referred to in those days as Prant Konkan and Prant Varghat respectively. Broadly speaking, under Konkan there were thirteen subas viz. Ramnagar, Jawhar, Kalyan, Bhivandi, Rajpuri (Dandarajpuri), Javali, Dabhol, Rajapur, Kudal, Bhimgadh, Phonde and Ankole (in extreme South in Karwar district). The subas included under Varghat were, Poona, Junnar, Supe-Baramati, Maval, Wai, Satara, Karad, Khatav, Man, Phaltan, Malkapur, Panhala, Kolhapur Tarale and Ajre. These twenty-nine subas were further divided into two hundred and twenty eight mahals.

The eight subas of Karnataka comprised of Laxmeshwar, Navalgund, Koppal, Halyal, Betgire, Belgaum, Sampgaon and Gadag. Besides this, on the East coast was the territory of Jinji (Tanjore). The subas pertaining to Swaraj appear to be smaller in extent as compared to the subas under the Mughal empire. The Mughal subas were divided into Sarkars and Parganas, whereas these were formed on the pattern of Adil Shahi subas, which were small and compact and hence very convenient for administration.The subas of Junnar, Kalyan, Bhivandi and Dandarajpuri, were always

the bone of contention between the Marathas on the one hand and the Mughals and the Sidis respectively on the other. In fact, the fort of Dandarajpuri, more or less remained with the Sidis. The Mughals always considered Kalyan being their capital of the Konkan region.

Besides these subas, there were about one hundred and forty-five forts, big and small, in Shivaji's kingdom, spread over from Konkan, Varghat and Sahyadri ranges, to eight subas of Karnataka and Jinji on the East coast.[1]

1.1 The Succession of Sambhaji:

The new state of Maharashtra was in its infancy. The roots of Swaraj had not yet taken firmly to the soil of Maharashtra and suddenly the sappling was cut off from its very life force, as death struck its founder. He left behind him many knotty problems unresolved, the most challenging was that of succession as the great ruler had named two heirs. Both the potential contestants were his sons, Sambhaji and Rajaram, born of two of his wives. The country appeared to be evenly divided on the issue of succession. This brought about dissensions amongst the ablest and most trustworthy followers of Shivaji.

The question of succession was solved by Sambhaji through some quick and vigorous actions.

At the time of Shivaji's death Sambhaji was at Panhala. The whole situation has been thus described by English Factors in their letter of 19th April, 1680. 'Nothing more worthy your Honours notice, except to advise your Honour etc. of the death of Shivaji whose death we fear will cause a great deal of trouble in these parts, for most of the merchants are ready to run away, and certainly should any lashkar, come near the place, they would embark. Sambhaji Rajah has taken up his quarters at Panhala where goes daily to him abundance of soldiers, he hath sent down and stopped all the corn that is in town and ordered it sent upto him-we likewise do expect that the place would suddenly be

secured by Sambhaji Rajah's party, and what we shall do in that condition, we leave to your Honour etc. to judge.[2] From the above letter intentions of Sambhaji become very clear. In general public opinion was in favour of Sambhaji's succession to the throne. A Marathi letter of the same period speaks in a similar way. It says, 'before this date' (19th April, 1680) 'Sambhaji was at Panhala. The army joined him. Sambhaji enforced economic blockade. Ordered all the grain to be carried to Panhala. There was a general fear that Sambhaji's men may attack Karwar.'[3] From this it appears that Sambhaji took over reins of the kingdom and his immediate plan was to attack Karwar.

By 27th April, 1680 Sambhaji had assumed complete control of his kingdom. Rajapur Factors state, 'Sambhaji has taken upon him to govern and title of king. He has sent for all persons that were in command as Subahdars, Havildars, etc. Some he imprisoned and some he discharges of their employs, we have lately come here new subahdar sent by him.'[4]

On 12th July, 1680 the Bombay Factors informed 'Sambhaji is publically declared Rajah, the country begins to be well settled..... report speaks of him as very diligent and careful.....'[5]

Thus it seems that the reaction of the people in Maharashtra in general was favourable to Sambhaji's accession to the throne. The formal coronation of Sambhaji took place only in February 1681. He had assumed full powers of a king and had become the leader of the Marathas even before this date.

1.2 The Problems Before The New King Of The Marathas

After having successfully solved the problem of succession, Sambhaji took interest in the administration of the Maratha land.

There were many other problems, some of them of great dimensions, problems which would hardly permit any delay

in attending to them. Most important amongst these was the impending danger of an external aggression. The strongest enemy of the new state was the Mughal Emperor, Aurangzeb. It was his desire to crush the new state of the Marathas. He was on the look out of an opportunity to attack the Maratha State and in the death of Shivaji, he readily found one. He was not the one to let it go waste. The crying need of the hour for the people and the king of Maharashtra was therefore to organise proper defences in order to meet the impending attack by the Mughal Emperor. The statesmen and ministers left behind by Shivaji were quick to grasp the magnitude of the problem facing them. The generals of his army, who had mastered the technique of warfare from Shivaji, could ill afford to neglect the strategy of future war which could easily embroil them with the surrounding states of Bijapur and Hyderabad. The people were to be made aware of the impending danger of external attack and had to be told that failure in its face meant slavery and serfdom for many years to come, if not total annihilation.

Coupled with this was another problem that had to be faced by the Maratha rulers, the danger to their religion. For centuries in the past, people were forcibly converted to Islam. With the rise of Shivaji and the creation of a new state their religion got the protection of the state. There was every possibility of attacks on their religion being renewed by the Muslim rulers. The problem of preservance of Hindu religion required immediate attention. At the same time, he was to reassure all his subjects the continuation of his father's policy i.e. universal toleration and equal justice to all classes subject to his rule.

In addition to the two major problems, which demanded immediate attention of Sambhaji, there was one more problem, which he could have hardly overlooked. There were enemies in the coastal region i.e. the naval powers like the Portuguese, the Dutch, the English and the Sidis. They

could be expected to pick up quarrels with the new state that was now sailing through troubled waters. During Shivaji's regime they had posed problem and had worked against the Maratha king.

1.3 Sambhaji On The Offensive-Early Activities

It appears that the Bijapur court tried to reap some advantage from the confusion existing at Raigadh, the capital of the Maratha state. A small detachment of the Bijapuri army, referred to in Marathi records as 'Muhammedan army' attacked the fort of Nandi in the Karnatak region, controlled by the Maratha officers. A contemporary letter (21 July 1680) has described the situation thus 'Shiv Chhatrapati's son Sambhaji was ruling this territory of Chick-Balapur: At that time, Balaji Krishna was in charge of the fort of Jogdeva. On the orders of Raghunath Pandit (Hanmante), he took charge of the fort Nandi. The Muhammedans had come with large forces to capture this fort, but they were defeated.'[6]

In 1680, the Mughal viceroy of the Suba of the Deccan was Prince Mu'azzam (Shah Alam), the eldest son of Aurangzeb. He was recalled to assist Aurangzeb in his campaign against the Rajputs. In his place Kha-i-Jahan (Bahadur Shah) was sent as Subhadar of the Deccan. This was his second tenure. He arrived in the Deccan sometime in May 1680. In July he laid siege to Ahivant, a fort under the Marathas. Khan-i-Jahan's attempt to capture the fort failed. The Marathas defended it strongly.

By about 7th July 1680 Ranmast Khan, with four hundred men, went to Hanvantgadh (Hanumantgadh) in order to lay siege to it. This was in Maratha possession. Khan-i-Jahan Bahadur went towards Dhrupgadh. [7] A Maratha force was busy repairing a small fort near Mulher. Debi Singh, the Mughal qil'edar of Mulher, drove away the Maratha force that attempted to repair it. [8]

After securing his position at Raigadh, Sambhaji had

planned to move against Khan-i-Jahan.[9] But no encounter took place. After the Dasara festival i.e. by October-November (1680), Sambhaji moved against Khan-i-Jahan. He divided his army in three divisions, each consisting of horse and foot soldiers and ordered them to march in three different directions viz. Surat, Burhanpur and Aurangabad: With the news of the raid, Khan-i-Jahan moved towards Khandesh and the Marathas withdrew temporarily.

In August 1680 the Marathas looted twenty-five guns of the Mughals near Sholapur. They were being transported on the orders of Khan-i-Jahan Bahadur when the Marathas seized them. As a result of it, Ali Aqa Rumi, Jagat Singh Hada and Raja Jaswant Singh Bundela, who were supposed to carry these guns, lost their mansabs and had to make good the losses. [10]

By December, Sambhaji was near Sholapur. Ranmast Khan and some other Mughal officers encountered him and in the ensuing battle many men on both the sides were killed. [11]

2 Burhanpur Plundered

A part of the above plan was put into execution and by the end of 1680 the Maratha forces plundered Burhanpur. These forces were headed by Hambir Rao Mohite, the Commander-in-Chief of the Maratha army. This event took place in the month of October-November 1680. [12]

More details of this event are given by Khafi Khan and Bhimsen. Khafi Khan, writes 'at that time the Subahdar of Burhanpur was Khan-i-Jahan Bahadur Khan and his deputy Kakkar Khan was away on the job of collecting the jizya tax. Sambhaji was ravaging the territory of Khandesh with twenty thousand men. Passing further about seventy miles this army fell on the suburbs of Burhanpur. The people there had least expected any such attack; they were, therefore, ill prepared for any defence. The garrison of Burhanpur

consisted of two hundred and fifty men. Kakkar Khan on his return did not have enough courage to give an open fight to the Marathas. Therefore he chose to withdraw. The Marathas burnt various parts of the city and carried away loot worth lakhs of rupees, in addition to gold, ornaments, precious stones, foodgrains, glassware, etc.' Khan-i-Jahan, on receipt of this information, made a speedy dash from Aurangabad and reached the ghats of Fardapur, a place thirty-two miles northwards of Aurangabad and rested there for some time because of a continuous march.

Meanwhile the Maratha forces received intelligence of Khan-i-Jahan's approach. The nearest resort of safety for them was the fort of Salher in the territory of Baglana. They took up the road via Chopda and reached Salher after a march of four days.

Khan-i-Jahan did not proceed further; instead he turned towards Babulgaon, a place thirty-two miles from Aurangabad and encamped there. There he learnt that another Maratha force was coming up by way of Ahmadnagar and Mungipaithan to raid Aurangabad. The Maratha force had assembled at Baipura, a suburb of Aurangabad and Satara village. Though Anup Singh Rathod was there, he had only a scanty force at his disposal. Hence Khan-i-Jahan rushed there. But the Marathas fled away without fighting.[13]

Meanwhile during January, 1681 a false rumour gained currency that Sambhaji was killed by his sardars and Shivaji's younger son (Rajaram) was made Rajah and Raghunath Pandit was arrested. But this, of course, was totally false. It only shows that the conditions in the Maratha kingdom were far from settled.

3 Sambhaji and Muhammad Akbar

In the history of the Mughal dynasty in India succession to the throne had always remained a problem. And a student of history comes across a strange phenomenon, that the sons of

every emperor rebelled against him in his own life time and tried to establish their right of succession to the throne. Whether it was the reign of Jahangir, Shah Jahan, or Aurangzeb, each one in his own turn repeated the history.

Therefore, the course of event was not unexpected when prince Muhammad Akbar, the fourth son of Aurangzeb, declared himself emperor of India, on 1st January 1681.

He marched with his Rajput army and followers on Ajmer to attack and capture Aurangzeb. But he was unsuccessful in his design, and had to take to flight. He crossed the Narmada near Akbarpur on 4th May 1681, accompanied by Durgadas Rathod. Where was he to go? The North was closed for him. The only place where he could seek shelter was Maharashtra, and the only king in the Deccan who could give him political asylum in the face of mighty opposition from Aurangzeb was Sambhaji.

Sambhaji extended his hospitality to the son of his enemy. The prince eluded the chasing armies of Khan-i-Jahan, Mir Nurullah, qil'edar of Thalner and Raja Devi Singh Bundela, the faujdar of Baglan and managed to reach the land of Maharashtra. He was welcomed by Sambhaji's officers near Trimbak (Nasik) and conducted with honour to Pali (in Konkan). This happened on 1st June, 1681. [14]

Akbar was accompanied by four hundred cavalry and a small body of infantry and fifty camels for transport. Three hundred Maratha foot soldiers formed his bodyguard. A fortnight after his arrival, Hiroji Farzand carried a letter and presents for him from Sambhaji.

3.1 Aurangzeb Decides To Invade The Maratha Land

The die was now cast. By giving shelter to Akbar, according to some, Sambhaji not only hastened up the inevitable but accentuated its ferocity. Aurangzeb now decided to invade the Deccan in person. Simultaneously orders were issued to enforce strict blockade of the Maratha country (July 1681).

The provincial officers of the Mughals and local officers like the deshmukh and the deshpandes in the Mughal service from various villages surrounding borders of Qutb Shahi, Adil Shahi and the Maratha territory were ordered not to permit the traders carrying out sale of fire arms, ammunition, weapons etc. Similarly the traders selling horses were also not permitted to cross into Bijapur, Golkonda and the Maratha land. An undertaking was obtained from the officers at village level and they were threatened with severe consequences for any default on their part. Besides this he ordered a detailed topographical survey, particularly of the valleys and the hilly passages in the Deccan. Soon he was informed that there were three hundred and sixty passages through various valleys and mountains to enter into the Deccan, out of which, sixty five were such that elephants and camels could pass and the rest were very difficult and the roads were extremely narrow.[15] The Mughal soldiers were not familiar with this type of terrain and were to find it difficult to survive in the valleys of the Deccan, in the course of next twenty-five years. The Balaghat and Sahyadri ranges and the extreme rains in Talkonkan were to pose real problems to his soldiers, marching against the Marathas.

After having made these preliminary arrangements, the Mughal armies commenced their march against the Maratha kingdom.

According to Bhimsen, Aurangzeb left Ajmer for the Deccan in order to suppress his rebel son Akbar. Khafi Khan, attributes one more reason. 'The Emperor (Aurangzeb) started for the Deccan in order to punish the infidels and chase his rebel son.'[16] From Ajmer, he reached Burhanpur on 13th November 1681. From there he started for Aurangabad and reached the town on 22nd March 1682. From now onwards we see the beginning of a real struggle between the Marathas and Aurangzeb.

Before going into the details of the ensuing struggle it is necessary to say something about Akbar's future. Akbar stayed in the Maratha kingdom for some six years. What was his mission in coming over to the Maratha king? And to what extent was it fulfilled? A careful study of the events of this period and the relationship that existed between the two viz. Sambhaji and Akbar, is sufficient to throw some light on these questions.

Akbar came to the Deccan with the expectation and hope that the Maratha king would help him with his army in order to carry out his design i.e. undertaking a march to the North in order to defeat and depose his father Aurangzeb, their common enemy. He wanted to execute this plan without loss of time. Aurangzeb at this time was busy fighting the Rajputs. An attack on his army at this moment would have made his position very critical as he would have been obliged to fight on two different and distinct fronts. This would have afforded a chance of victory to Akbar. What terms did he offer to Sambhaji in return for this help? The records are silent about it.

During this period Akbar was quite active, he was collecting more and more men. His preparations for executing the plan were on. 'Akbar's force increases daily. He hath now about one and a half thousand horse and at Trimbak (there) awaits him five or six thousand horse more. Sambhaji is daily expected to wait on him and it is said, will with two thousand horse, conduct him to Burhanpur, where all the Hindu Rajahs will meet him and some umaras that are his friends. From thence they intend to march for Delhi.' [17]

But the events did not move according to the expectations of Akbar. For some time after his arrival at Pali, Sambhaji could neither go and see him nor grant him an interview. He was much occupied with his internal affairs. This resulted in loss of time and opportunity.

By June 1681 Aurangzeb made peace with the Maharana and on 31st July the Mughal armies set out under the banner

of prince Aazam for the Deccan. Aurangzeb himself had taken Akbar's challenge seriously and by the middle of November, all the military strength of the empire was being mobilised to the Deccan. The best generals of the Mughal army, three princes and the Emperor himself now converged on the Deccan, in order to direct and supervise the military operations. But these were not so short and swift as the Emperor had expected. They pinned him down to the Deccan for the next twenty-five years!

On 22nd March, 1682, Aurangzeb was at Aurangabad. He had already sealed Akbar's all likely apporaches to North India.

Prior to 8th September, 1681 Sambhaji informed Akbar that he was prepared with thirty thousand soldiers to attack Burhanpur.[18] This indicates that the preparations for the march to the North were afoot. Apparently it looks as if Sambhaji had approved the plan of Akbar and accordingly he was keeping Akbar informed about its progress. On 12th October, 1681 Sambhaji was at Rahiri (Raigadh). Here he seemed to be engrossed in two main affairs, the first was the reported conspiracy to poison him and the second ofcourse was the progress of the preparations for an attack on Burhanpur. Therefore, it appears that till this date he was firm about the plan of the campaign. The news of these large-scale preparations is further confirmed by the Bombay Council to Surat Factors in their letter dated 27th October 1681. It Says "Sambhaji Rajah is making ready great forces both horse and foot to assist sultan Akbar. It is said, in a month more they may march out of these parts and that they intend to march straight away for Burhanpur - God help you and the Hon'ble company's concerns from them. Ram Rajah's mother (Soyarabai) is dead, by report poisoned by Sambhaji Raja's contrivance."[19] And then on 13th November a meeting took place between him and Akbar at Patshahpur.[20] What transpired in this meeting is not on record, as accounts of this meeting are not available. But one

thing appears to be certain from subsequent events that the proposed march to Burhanpur did not take place. Sambjaji's attention was more urgently required nearer home and one finds that in March 1682, he was busy fighting his enemies at the sea, particularly the Sidis of Janjira and the Portuguese.

It is not surprising therefore, that this trend of events, especially Sambjaji's failure to support Akbar in the campaign of the North, caused much disappointment to the latter.

This uneasy state of affairs continued till December, 1684. Akbar could not meet Sambhaji. From Malkapur he also wrote to Kavi Kalasha.[21]

But records are silent about subsequent events. It is not known whether the meeting actually took place or not. It is quite apparent that no substantial results came out of it even if it had taken place. A little later, on 18th January 1685, Akbar wrote to Sambhaji. "It is certain that by this time the Mughals (might) have gone away (or otherwise) you (would) have marched with your army as you had written to me, towards Khelna. If you write I too shall go and join you in the campaign."[22]

This is the last letter of Akbar available on record indicating his activities. From other sources it is gathered that he did take active part along with Sambhaji's troops fighting against the Portuguese. He was also connected with conducting the peace negotiations along with Kavi Kalash with Prince Aazam, the Dutch officers and the Portuguese.

But then we learn that in February-March 1687 Akbar sailed for Iran. He left both Maharashtra and India a sad, disappointed but perhaps a wiser person. It had dawned upon him finally that his ambition and mission of launching a massive attack on the Mughal divisions at Ahmadnagar, Aurangabad, Junnar and Burhanpur, thus making way for the campaign of the North and ultimately securing the throne, had failed, He had looked upon his host Sambhaji

for aid in his hour of need. But Sambhaji had failed to respond. In Akbar's opinion, Sambhaji's war with the Portuguese, the Dutch and the Sidis was just a waste of time, men and material.

It is rather difficult in the absence of any records to know the reasons of Sambhaji's decision to neglect the plan of Akbar.

Historians of Sambhaji have questioned the political wisdom of Sambhaji's handling of the entire Akbar episode. In the opinion of some, Sambhaji should have appreciated and valued greatly the opportunity he got in the form of prince Akbar, the most beloved son of Emperor Aurangzeb. He should have exploited it to the best of his advantage. He could have, had he so wished, possibly dictated his own terms to Aurangzeb and saved Maharashtra from future blood-shed and ravage. But no such indications are noticed from records of that period. The other alternative for Sambhaji was to follow a bold policy as urged by prince Akbar and launch an attack on the Mughal divisions at Ahmadnagar, Aurangabad, Junnar or Burhanpur and eventually invade the North.

He did not follow either of these courses, although the records reveal that military preparations went ahead so as to launch a grand scale attack on the Mughal territory. But nothing seems to have materialised. According to Prof. Sarkar, "Sambhaji's interest did not exactly coincide with Akbar's. Why should he go out of the safety of the Deccan hills and jungles into the broad plains of North India, where his troops would lose their natural advantage? Why should he denude his country of its defences by accompanying Akbar in the wild project of invading Hindustan, give Aurangzeb an opportunity of conquering Maharashtra in his absence and cutting off his return home from North India, where a defeat should mean annihilation for the Maratha army? His work lay at home." [23]

Prof. Sarkar has rightly pointed out that the interests of Sambhaji and Prince Akbar were not identical. For Sambhaji safety was more important. However, Sambhaji should have understood the gravity of risk involved in giving shelter to the son of his sworn enemy. His generals could appreciate the likely consequences that Aurangzeb could not have possibly remained a passive spectator of the situation. He was sure to march to the Deccan with all his might. He had never pardoned Shivaji for raising a new kingdom, when he was destroying others. In fact, he was on the look out of an excuse to invade the Maratha land. And shelter given to prince Akbar by Sambhaji readily provided one. The matter was only of time. He could not immediately take any action as he was occupied with the war in Rajputana.

Sambhaji could have exploited this opportunity, by using Akbar as a hostage and gained vital political concessions. Alternatively, in anticipation of a prolonged war with Aurangzeb, he could have kept himself in readiness along with his army and had equipped his soldiers for future battles, in plains or in the hills. He had inherited well trained armies. The Maratha soldiers in the past had fought many battles and the army generals were of high calibre. They were both, physically and mentally prepared for such an eventuality. What was required was a capable leader to march them in the battle-field. Further a pre-emptive attack by Sambhaji, on the Mughal forces, would certainly have impeded free and unopposed march of the Mughal armies in Maharashtra. This would have created an adverse effect on Aurangzeb's future designs. There was no doubt, that by launching such an invasion he was going to risk the safety of the state. The main principle of any war strategy is to launch an offensive in the enemy territory. The party delivering the first blow often gains fifty percent victory. Such a blow certainly serves as a deterent and acts as a demoralising force on the enemy's rank and file. Sambhaji could have chosen

any of these courses. However he used his discretion otherwise. But before passing any judgement on Sambhaji, it is worthwhile remembering that the situation in which Sambhaji was placed was certainly unusual. He could not be expected to judge Aurangzeb before he knew him well. There were simultaneously a number of options open before him. And therefore it cannot be said with any certainty, as to why he chose one particular course and discarded the other.

From an analysis of the activities of Sambhaji during this period it appears that he chose to play the role of a defender instead, of an aggressor. The ploitical happenings in the subsequent years clearly speak of the bitter consequences, perhaps an outcome of Sambhaji's adoption of this ploicy. The only justification perhaps may be that he thought of dealing with the Portuguese on the sea coast first. It may perhaps be that he was doubtful about the capabilities, leadership and the support of Akbar.

3.2. The Mughal offensive in Konkan and its failure :

Konkan described

The Sahyadri range or the Western Ghat, running parallel to the western coast of India, cuts off a long narrow strip of country from the Deccan plateau. This strip of land is called Konkan Prant or the territory of Konkan. It comprised the districts along the sea coast from Gandevi near Surat to Akola (Ankola) in Karwar (excepting Bombay, Janjira, Daman and Goa). It was bound by the Arabian Sea on the west and the Western Ghats on the East. Moving southward, first from Gandevi, we come across the lands of Koli tribes referred to in Marathi records as Kolvan. It had two kingdoms of Ramnagar and Jawhar of the Kolis. South of Kolvan begins Konkan proper. It is divided into two parts viz. North and South Konkan In the North Konkan were included modern towns of Thane, Kalyan, Bhivandi, Mahad, Javali, Danda Rajpuri, Dabhol and Rajapur. North Konkan is the coastal tract parallel to the Poona and Nasik districts which lie east of the mountain chain. South Konkan

is formed by the Ratnagiri district stretching upto Vengurle, Savant Wadi, Kudal, Bhimgadh, Phonde and to the extreme end Ankole in Karwar district.

Geographically, Konkan occupies a very strategic position, from where, the Marathas were able to move in northern and southern parts of the Deccan, without much interruption. The military movements of the Marathas in the 17th century from Konkan into the other parts of the Deccan illustrate the point very convincingly. A Maratha force which had advanced beyond Dharampur could either sack Surat or Broach by turning to north or could enter Khandesh eastwards, and easily and comfortably reach Nandurbar. From this point it could make an easy sweep in the entire Khandesh and return by way of Daultabad and Nasik. Nandurbar was the biggest military station of the Mughals in the 17th century.

In a similar way, it could also commence its march from Kolvan and reach Salher and Mulher region after crossing the broken country of Baglana and enter West Khandesh, plains of north Nasik district or penetrate into the vicinity of Chandor, Ellora, Aurangabad and Jalana. Aurangabad was the capital of the Mughal Deccan in the 17th century and a Maratha force could reach that place by the route already explained, without encountering any natural obstacles on the way. The Maratha force could reach Nasik from Kalyan through the Ghats. Similarly by crossing Naneghat, from Kalyan, it could reach Junnar and Poona with ease. The range of Western Ghats has numberless passes, very difficult to traverse, but extremely useful in cutting short the geographical distance between low lands of Konkan and Varghat or uplands or the Desh stretching southwards. In fact Konkan, North and South were the nerve centres of the movements of the Maratha army in the 17th century. Shivaji in his time effectively made use of konkan to his best advantage. His possession of Konkan remained

unchallenged till his death in 1680. Therefore the Maratha statesmen always tried to retain the control of Konkan.

In Konkan, the regions which were held by Sambhaji in 1680 were Ramnagar, Jawhar, Kalyan-Bhivandi, Cheul, Dabhol, Rajapur and in the extreme south Kudal, Bhimgadh, Phonda and Ankole. With the accession of Sambhaji,we notice the Mughal struggle for occupation of Konkan, both North and South. This was essentially with a view to restricting the movements of the Marathas, who were using Konkan, as a spring-board for their aggression in the Bijapuri and the Mughal territories.

The first attempt of the Mughals to penetrate into the Konkan was made in January 1682. Poona and Nasik were under the Mughals. Hasan Ali Khan, with twenty thousand horse and fifteen thousand foot soldiers, was ordered to descend the Naneghat, from Junnar and enter into Kalyan, the seat of the Mughal Subhadar of Kalyan. He reached Kalyan by the end of the month. In the following month (24 February) Ranmast Khan also arrived at Kalyan.[24] They ravaged the country and at the end of September, Ranmast Khan left for Ahmadnagar on the orders of Aurangzeb in order to punish the Marathas.[25] At this time Sambhaji was occupied with the siege of Janjira against the Sidis. After the rainy season was over (1682), in the month of September, Sidi Yaqut Khan, qil'edar of Dandarajpuri, reported to Aurangzeb, that Sambhaji had already embarked on the defence of Konkan and had started recruiting men in that region.[26] Further he was occupied with blocking the passage of the Mughal forces into Talkonkan. He had issued orders to his various officers and men to keep a watch on the roads leading to Talkonkan and if necessary to close them to the Mughals.[27] He drew attention of all his officers on various posts in Talkonkan to the impending danger of the Mughal attack and put them on alert. By October, all the roads to Konkan were closed and no Mughal soldier was allowed to pass by these roads.

On 28th September, Bahadur and others were asked to march to the valley of Talkonkan.[28]

In the month of October, Khan-i-Jahan Bahadur was asked to march against the Marathas in Konkan. But he declined and got himself excused. Later on Aurangzeb conferred the title of Bahadur Khan on Ranmast Khan and asked him to proceed to Talkonkan.[29] This was his second assignment in Konkan against the Marathas in a short period of six months. He complained to Aurangzeb about the unsatisfactory condition of the army and acute shortage of foodgrains. The pay of the soldiers was in arrears and there was none to give them any financial assistance.[30] However, it seems that he left for Talkonkan. He mustered about nine thousand foot soldiers in a short time. Another two thousand soldiers of Kanhoji also joined him. Simultaneously, Shihab-ud-din Khan descended into Konkan from Junnar. He burnt twenty villages of the Marathas, killed many men and carried away cattle. Further, with the help of a certain Isa a local zamindar, who was well acquainted with the territory of the Marathas, he invaded. He burnt a few villages, killed four hundred men, arrested one thousand and carried away four thousand cattle. As a reward of this bravery, he was awarded a special robe by Aurangzeb.[31]

In November a Maratha force consisting of six to seven thousand cavalry and infantry men repaired a small fortress near Kalyan-Bhivandi and established a post there. On 28th November, Bahadur Khan fought a battle and defeated them. Again, on 3rd December, a Maratha army consisting of ten thousand cavalry men and twelve thousand foot soldiers, led by Rupaji Bhosale, Kesopant and Nilopant Peshwa gathered there. A severe battle was fought. The Marahta force retreated. From there Bahadur Khan marched towards Bitanga fort, and burnt the Wadi of the fort.[32] Shortly after this battle the Maratha army made two more night attacks on Ranmast Khan's army. The Mughals

offered strong resistance. They defeated the Marathas and recovered, many mares, one umbrella and one dhup (a small weapon).[33] Then he repaired the fortress but the parapet wall was left incomplete. He employed two thousand men to keep watch on the fort and guard the vicinity of it.

During the last week of December 1682, Tukoji, a commander of Sambhaji arrived at a distance of eight miles from Kalyan-Bhivandi. He dug up trenches. Immediately Ranmast Khan, Sidi Yaqut Khan and his maternal uncle who were engaged in bringing the food grains, marched out to meet the enemy. Others were left behind at Kalyan-Bhivandi. Daud Khan, Abul Faiyaz Khan etc. of the Mughal army were divided in to three divisions in order to face the Marathas. In the initial stages the two sides fought from a distance using arrows, bows and muskets. Finally an assault with swords and spears was made. Tukoji and many others were killed. The Marathas then retreated to the nearby mountains.[34] The month of January 1683 appears to be without any activity.

By the end of February 1683, we come across a major battle which may be termed as a climax of the Kalyan-Bhivandi campaign. The battle took place near Kalyan (Titwala) on 27th February. On the Maratha side were Hambir Rao Mohite, Rupaji Bhosale, Manaji More, many prominent generals of the Marathas including wife's brother of Hambir Rao. The chief of the Maratha army had twenty thousand cavalry and ten thousand foot soldiers. On the Mughal side were Ruh-ullah Khan, Sayyid Izat Khan, Ranmast Khan, Ram Singh Ratnawat and Padam Singh Hada. Front guard of the army was formed by Padam Singh. A very servere fighting took place. Hambir Rao was wounded by an arrow of a Mughal soldier. His wife's brother, three other sardars and another prominent leader Ghorpade were killed. About two hundred Maratha soldiers were killed. On the Mughal side the casualities were very heavy. Padam Singh received thirty five wounds and died. Bhagwant Singh, son of Mankoji Dakhni, was killed. Ram

Singh, son of Ratan Singh Rathod, after hearing the news of Padam Singh's death wanted to go to the battle-field inspite of his sickness. But he had become so weak due to fever that he collapsed and died. Hari Singh, son of Puranmal Bundela, who was wounded was left behind on the battle-field and the Marathas carried him away. He died on the way. Raghunath Singh, Kabli Singh, Madhoram Sisodia, Tukoji and other Mughal soldiers were wounded. In the Akhbarat of this date, there is a long list of the dead and wounded. In fact, an earlier report of the battle mentions that almost all the Mughal soldiers were killed or wounded.[35] Though the Marathas displayed great strength and valour, the fort remained with the Mughals. This was perhaps one of the major battles that the Marathas fought with the Mughals during this period. Though the fort remained with the Mughals, the battle created sufficient terror amongst the Mughal soldiers. The Marathas were so active and their resistence was so strong during this period that the Mughal commanders, who were ordered to face them, tried to avoid the encounters with one excuse or the other. Qasim Khan was ordered on 23rd February to go to Talkonkan to assist Bahadur Khan. But he excused himself on the pretext that he was not familiar with the terrain. Finally, Aurangzeb asked Ruhullah Khan to escort him to Talkonkan.

The next two months of the year 1683 passed silently. On 5th March, Salabat Khan, an officer of the Mughal artillery was sent to Kalyan-Bhivandi and was asked to remain alert.[36]

By now Sambhaji intensified the blockade of Kalyan-Bhivandi so well that it was not possible for Ranmast Khan to procure foodgrains either from the plateau of Fardapur or by the sea route.[37] On 15th March Ruhullah Khan arrived at Kalyan-Bhivandi and joined Ranmast Khan. On 17th March, they gave a battle to the Marathas in which most of the Mughal soldiers were killed.[38] Next day, Ruhullah Khan attacked the non-combatants of the Marathas. Again by the

end of March, Saifullah, son of Ruhullah Khan, went to chase the Marathas who had appeared within fourteen miles of Kalyan-Bhivandi.[39] He burnt a cuple of villages of the Marathas. Sambhaji's blockade of Ranmast Khan's army had now become so effective that the Mughals were compelled to approach the Enghlish for rescue.[40]

3.3. South Konkan invaded by the Mughals

After the rainy season of 1683, the Mughal offensive in the Konkan was reopened. Shah Alam was appointed to conduct this campaign and capture all the forts in the possession of Sambhaji in that territory. It was now for the second time that the Mughal armies were marching into the Konkan. Shah Alam was accompanied by Atish Khan, the chief of artillery, Sarfraz Khan, Ikhlas Khan, brother of Bahlul Khan, Nago (Mane?) Maratha, Khwaja Mukarram and an army of twenty thousand men.[41] This time Shah Alam descended into South Konkan instead of going after Kalyan-Bhivandi.

A few days after 15th September 1683, Shah Alam penetrated into Sawantwadi and the South Konkan by the Ramghat pass. His march was opposed bravely by the Marathas. The roads were narrow and the front guards of Shah Alam's army had a tough time facing the Marathas. Many people died on both the sides.

Khafi Khan has given a very graphic account of this campaign. He says, "The territory was full of thorny trees and dense jungles. On one side there were high mountains and on the other side were deep valleys. Many infidels were put to death. Khwaja Abul-Mukarram and other sardars showed considerable valour. But the food and climate was unsuitable for the Mughal army. Even animals like horses and camels could not survive. In this campaign many men and animals perished. No horses were left in the army ... The infidels blockaded the roads from all sides, and supplies were stopped. The condition of the army became precarious and it became difficult for the Prince to stay there. At last he

requested Aurangzeb for permission to withdraw."[42] Things do not seem to have gone so badly for they reached Sampgaon fort, and laid siege to it. Jan Nisar Khan and two other sardars received wounds. The Marathas fought bravely but ultimately gave up the fort.[43] On 28th December Shah Alam again descended into Konkan through Ramghat and burnt Kudal and Banda.

On 15th January 1684, Shah Alam arrived at Dicholim on his way back. From there he proceeded to Vengurla and on 20th February ascended the Ramghat.[44] Men and animals perished alike in large numbers in this campaign.

Thus came to an end the second Konkan offensive of the Mughals within a period of three years. Aurangzeb's best generals and possibly a large number of military contingents were utilised in the offensive. But the Marathas fought bravely and proved superior in military strategy. The only place where the Mughals got substantial success was, the capture of fort of Salher, through the efforts of Neknam Khan. But for the huge bribes doled out by Neknam Khan, possibly there also the Mughals might have failed. Aurangzeb was very much upset over these continued failures. And consequently he became more determined to defeat the Marathas. The English Factors at Karwar are very vocal about it. "He is so inveterate against the Rajah that he hath thrown off his pagri and sworn never to put it on again, till he hath either killed, taken, or routed him (Sambhaji) out of his country."[45]

The Marathas on their part were equally determined and busied themselves in making preparations for the war with the Mughals. From a letter dated 3rd January 1684 addressed to Deshmukhs of Wai, it is clear that Sambhaji was quite conscious of the need for more soldiers in order to fight the Mughal aggression. "Sultan Muazzam and Shihab-ud-din Khan have entered the Konkan territory. On this occasion there is urgent necessity of armed men. Therefore Santaji Yemaji has been sent to recruit men in the Varghat

territory. He will relate to you the urgency in the recruitment of soldiers. You should act accordingly and send men. This is a very delicate (important) task. If a large number of men are recruited then there is no fear of the enemy. The enemy will be destroyed . . . You must rise to the occasion and prove worthy of it..."[46]

4. The Mughal-Maratha Activities (April 1681-March 1684)

The initial period of four years of Sambhaji's reign is full with many military activities. This was the period when he was engaged with the Portuguese and the Sidis at the sea. But his attention was diverted from these coastal enemies to a more powerful enemy on the land, when the Mughal armies had started pouring in the Deccan and when they started attacking his territories (April 1681). For the next three years we notice that the Mughal generals seem to have followed a pre-determined plan of action. Their army movements were controlled by Aurangzeb hemself, which worked like military Head Quarters, for all purposes. The regions where the Mughal-Maratha confrontation took place in these three years were Junnar - Sangamner - Nasik, Sholapur - along the Bhima river region upto Bidar, Aurangabad - Ahmadnagar, Poona - Supe - Baramati - Satara - Miraj - Kolhapur, Khandesh - Berar (in the north-west) and the North and the South Konkan. From this it appears that hardly there was any territory of the Marathas which was not being invaded by the Mughals. The initial impact of the Mughal forces on the Maratha land has been deep and massive. The Marathas resisted them firmly in all the regions. Wherever possible, they also took offensive and harassed the Mughal troops. The Maratha generals like Hambir Rao Mohite, Manaji More and Rupaji Bhosale indeed snowed the highest type of bravery against the Mughal armies.

Mughal Head Quarters and the army movements- A planned action against the Marathas (1681-1684)

Aurangzeb left Ajmer and arrived at Burhanpur on 13th November 1681. From there he started for Aurangabad.

In July 1681, Prince Aazam was ordered to look after the army operations in the Deccan and was asked to remain at Aurangabad. Another general Qulich Khan was sent on the Deccan expedition on 27th October 1681 and was presented with a special robe. Aurangzeb arrived at Aurangabad on 22nd March 1682.

In the previous year, from July 1680 onwards, there were several armed clashes, between the Mughals and the Marathas in various parts of Maharashtra. For initial one year Sambhaji's forces appeared to be aggressive and his army movements were also quick. It had become very difficult for the Mughal generals to drive away the Marathas and capture their territory. Faithful reports of their withdrawals in several theatres of war, were being received by Aurangzeb. After seeing the plight of his army in various confrontations with the Marathas he took two steps in mid-1681. First he appointed Prince Aazam with the title of Shah to the overall command of the Deccan expedition. Secondly he issued orders for tours of inspection by senior officers. Ikhlas Khan was to inspect various Mughal forts, if necessary to get them repaired and make arrangements of necessary provisions for these forts. He was asked to follow the route leading to Ahmadnagar and Pedgaon and return by way of Sangamner and Nevasa. A similar order was issued to Atish Khan, the Mughal officer in charge of the artillery in the Deccan.[47]

On 5th October Mamur Khan was asked to go to Baglana as the Marathas appeared there.[48]

On 19th October Khan-i-Jahan Bahadur was ordered to go to Varghat from Ramsej, Bahadur Khan to Talkonkan and Shihab-ud-din Khan to Chakan, where the Marathas were quite active.

The Maratha campaigns for the collection of chauth and for ravaging the Mughal territory had become quite alarming. Consequent upon this, Aurangzeb issued orders to

Mukarram Khan, Shihab-ud-din Khan, Firuz Khan and other commanders of the Mughal army as well as the Mughal thanedars in the respective regions not to permit the Marathas to collect chauth and to either arrest or chase the enemy away. In the event of the strength of the enemy being greater, they were to cooperate with each other and chastise the enemy. They were warned that, if the enemy entered the Mughal territory inspite of all these precautions, the concerned officer would be stripped off his mansab and position.[49] It appears that these orders of Aurangzeb failed to create the desired effect. The Marathas continued their activities against the Mughals, and collected chauth from the Mughal territories. On 22nd November 1682, Abdun Nabi Beg was given the title of Rozwihan Khan and was given charge of the artillery of the Deccan.[50]

Then there was news about a possible attack on Thalner by the Marathas. Shihab-ud-din Khan was asked to remain on the alert. On 28th November 1682, Aurangzeb received the news that two thousand cavalrymen of the Marathas came to the village Mehandali for ravaging the territory. Mukarram Khan rode the horse. On 20th November a fight took place at Unan, a village thirty miles away from Mehandali. Many men were killed on both the sides. About fifty men of the Marathas were taken away as prisoners.[51]

Mughal Khan was given a small cavalry-detachment and was asked to proceed to Purandar to occupy that territory. By about 27th December he reached Purandar, looted and burnt twenty seven villages in the vicinity and killed and wounded many men. The Marathas under Mankoji put up a brave defence. He was assisted by Thakur Banjara.[52]

On 21st December, a warning was issued to Munwwar Khan, Subahdar of Burhanpur to remain alert as the Marathas were active in Baglana.[53] Khan-i-Jahan Bahadur was asked to remain at Nasik and Aurangzeb desired to depute Ruhullah Khan to Berar. Khan-i-Jahan Bahadur was

ordered to proceed to Naldurg as the Marathas were very active there.[54] (1683. February 28).

In the same month, five thousand musketeers in charge of Salabat Khan and Atish Khan were transferred to the command of Prince Muhammad Aazam who was at Aurangabad.

On 5th August 1683 Aurangzeb visited prince Aazam's artillery at Aurangabad fort.[55]

In September-October Aurangzeb arrived at Ahmadnagar from Aurangabad.

On 12th October Aurangzeb encamped at Karanpur (?).[56] Prince Aazam, who was entrusted with the job of invading Bijapur, was transferred to Gulshanabad (Nasik) along with Bidar Bakhat. On 19th November, Sarbuland Khan and Khwaja Yakub went to Bahadurgadh to punish the Marathas. Prince Aazam, who was at Nasik, was sent to Bahadurgadh probably to assist Sarbulund Khan who was already in that region (13th February 1684).

5. The Mughal-Maratha Activities In Junnar-Sangamner Nasik Region (April 1681-December 1682)

Mughal attempt to capture the fort of Ramsej fails:

Soon after the arrival of Aurangzeb at Aurangabad (1682, March 22), he planned to capture the fort of Ramsej, seven miles north of Nasik. It stood at a height of three thousand two hundred seventy three feet above sea-level.

In April 1682, he ordered Shihab-ud-din Khan to lay siege to the fort of Ramsej.[57] On 24th May, Hayat Khan was sent to attack the fort.[58] Accordingly Shihab-ud-din Khan laid siege, dug trenches and mounted guns. But the experienced Maratha qil'edar was quite a match for him.In the words of Khafi Khan, "due to his constant efforts and strict vigilance, the Mughals did not gain any success. There were not any metallic guns in the fort. But there was big lot of hide and

skin lying in the fort. The men inside the fort made wooden guns. They filled the hide in the guns and charged. Thus one such gun used to serve the purpose of ten ordinary guns."[59] Sambhaji sent a large force to the rescue of the besieged. Hambir Rao arrived with eighteen thousand infantry, to raise the siege of Ramsej.[60]

In the month of April-May, Rupaji Bhosale and Manaji More gave a battle to Shihab-ud-din Khan near Ganeshgaon. They captured five hundred horses of the Mughals.[61]

Since May till august there does not appear to have taken place any major clash between the Mughals and the Maratha qil'edar however, on 21st August 1682, a night attack was planned by Qasim Khan by way of a broken tower of the Ramsej fort. About five to six hundred Mewati soldiers were kept in readiness for going inside the fort and giving battle. Some men of Khwaja Khan and Qasim Khan went towards the gate of the fort and shouted "the diggers want to come inside." As a result of this, the Maratha soldiers inside the fort were put on alert, they threw stones and fired musket shots. Most of the Mughal soldiers were wounded or killed. No further progress was possible in view of the determined opposition of the Marathas. In fact, the siege appeared to be going out of the hands of the Mughal soldiers. Immediately, Qasim Khan[62] was recalled. Aurangzeb sent a more able general viz. Khan-i-Jahan Bahadur to take charge of the siege and expected him to accomplish this difficult task.

Shihab-ud-din Khan left Ramsej on 30th August 1682. Khan-i-Jahan Bahadur laid siege to the fort immediately. He informed Aurangzeb that he was confident of capturing the fort.[63] But nothing seems to have been gained except a gun which the Marathas were carrying from Trimbak to Ramsej. Finally on 19th October Aurangzeb ordered Khan-i-Jahan Bahadur to go to Varghat and from there to Konkan. It appears that by September the Mughal siege virtually came to an end. And an amount of thirty seven thousand six hundred and thirty rupees was ordered to be recovered from

Khan-i-Jahan Bahadur towards the expenses of the siege of Ramsej as Khan-i-Jahan Bahadur, who had given an undertaking that he would capture the fort, had failed to do so.[64] Looking at the excellent performance of the qil'edar of Ramsej, Sambhaji honoured him by presenting a robe of honour, a pearl studded bracelet and some cash.[65]

The Marathas were active near Sangamner in August 1682. Two hundred cavalry-men and five hundred foot soldiers of the Marathas raided a place about two miles from Shivner and carried away fifteen hundred cattle. Naroji, the Mughal thanedar of Sangamner, did not give fight as he got scared of the large number of the Marathas.[66]

In September 1682, there was a rumour that the Marathas were coming to Antor. Immediately, Abdul Aziz, qil'edar of Junnar and Shah Muhammad, thanedar of Akola, were asked to go to rescue the place. But Shah Muhammad delayed in complying with the orders and therefore lost his mansab.[67]

The Marathas appeared in the vicinity of Antor. About ten to twelve thousand cavalry and infantrymen ravaged that territory. The Mughal thanedar begged for help. Immediately, Shihab-ud-din Khan was ordered to go for his rescue.[68] But it seems that he did not reach there, as on 3rd October 1682, he was asked to proceed to Ahmadnagar.[69]

By about 14th October 1682, a Maratha force appeared in the vicinity of Nasik, where the Mughals had their stronghold, plundered and burnt a few villages and went away.[70] Wise after the event, Aurangzeb issued strict orders to Raja Manohar Das Gor qil'edar of Mulher, Raja Mah Singh, thanedar of Nasik and Shah Muhammad, thanedar of Akola, that they should remain alert about the enemy.[71]

By 18th October 1682, Sambhaji's men went to Khandan fort[72] in order to lay siege to it. The Mughal qil'edar Allah Yar Khan chased them and captured ten Marahta soldiers.[73]

On 28th November 1682, a Maratha force consisting of six to seven thousand men came to Sangamner for collecting the chauth. Naroji, the Mughal thanedar of Sangamner, rode the horse. Muzfar Khan and Rao Muhakam Singh and others who were going towards Aundhapatta, were ordered to block the roads. Naroji encircled the Marathas near Bhojpura. A battle took place and many Marathas were killed, prominent amongst them was Lakhmoji, a Maratha commander. His head was cut off and sent to Aurangzeb. An equal number of the Mughals were also slain. [74]

A Maratha force under Naro Trimal appeared in the vicinity of Shikarpur. Mankoji, the Mughal thanedar of Shikarpur, defeated the Maratha force (1682, December 5).[75]

In the same month, the Marathas were busy collecting chauth near Hanumantgadh, Avla Javla and four other forts. Neknam Khan, the Mughal qil'edar of Dhrupgadh, sent his men to resist them. About fifteen Marathas were killed and injured. Similarly, most of the Mughal soldiers were also killed and wounded. [76]

6. The Mughal-Maratha activities along the Bhima river region upto Sholapur and Naldurg (1681-1684)

The year 1681, opened with the Marathas marching into Naldurg region. This was primarily the Adil Shahi territory, but had lately come in the possession of the Mughals.

In March-April 1681, Kalandar Khan, the Mughal qil'edar of Naldurg, drove away the men of Sambhaji, who had gone there to plunder that territory. Khan-i-Jahan Bahadur appointed Ranmast Khan and others to chastise the Marathas. A battle took place and the Mughals claimed victory. [77]

Subsequent to this, perhaps for the next year and half there do not seem to be any movement of Marathas in this region.

In September 1682 the Marathas were active near the Bhima river adjoining the imperial borders. Prince Aazam was in that area. He directed some of his men to chase away the Marathas. [78]

On 22nd October 1682, prince Aazam encamped at Tembhurni, while Qulich Khan and Sarfraz Khan, with thirteen thousand men, crossed the Bhima in order to chastise the Marathas.[79] On 5th October, Bahadurji, brother of Hindurao was given a robe of honour and was appointed to the army of prince Muiz-ud-din. [80]

In the latter half of October and before 3rd November a major battle took place between the two forces, some forty miles from the Bhima river in the Maratha territory. The Maratha army was led by its commander-in-chief Hambir Rao Mohite and another general Vithoji (Chavan). It consisted of twenty thousand cavalry and foot soldiers. On the Mughal side were Qulich Khan, Sarfraz Khan, Yalbarash Khan, Kamal-ud-din Khan and Kishor Singh Hada accompanied by seven thousand cavalry-men. Some three to four hundred Marathas were killed and many were wounded. The Mughal forces were successful.[81]

On 1st November 1682 the Marathas attacked Shaikh Budha a servant of Diler Khan, with his three hundred persons near Sholapur. He was carrying cash and other goods to Kamal-ud-din. It was a night attack. Some men from Shaikh's side were killed and the Marathas carried away the cash.[82] Diler Khan hastened to the Shaikh's help but it was too late.

The Maratha troops were frequently seen near Tembhurni. Bahadur Khan, who had gone there from Talkonkan, chased them away. He built a small fortress in the vicinity and collected the zamindars of the district.[83] In December a Maratha froce appeared near Bidar for collection of chauth. It ravaged some villages and carried away men and cattle. From there it went to Berar.[84]

Mukarram Khan, the Mughal officer in charge, did not have sufficient courage to resist their march. Immediately Khan-i-Jahan Bahadur was ordered to proceed there and chastise the Marathas.[85] But later on Aurangzeb changed his mind and Khan-i-Jahan Bahadur was ordered to proceed to Gulshanabad (Nasik) and remain alert over there. In his place Ruhullah Khan, with his army, was ordered to go to Berar.[86]

With the beginning of the year 1683, we find the Marathas being active near Naldurg again. By the end of January 1683, Manko Ballal, a Maratha commander of Sambhaji, along with five thousand men, attacked Naldurg. Qasim Khan rode horse and gave battle. Mir Abid, the Diwan of Qasim Khan's army and many others were killed.[87]

Sometime before 28th March, Naroji, an army commander of Sambhaji, along with his men, landed in Dharur. Qil'edar Khan, the Mughal qil'edar of Dharur, resisted the Marathas. Naroji along with a hundred others was killed. Their heads were cut off and a tower of severed heads was erected. Many men on either side were wounded. Thirteen persons of the Marathas were captured; many horses, spears and other weapons were recovered. It was reported that most of the Mughal soldiers were killed.[88] The Mughals lost the fort. It was regained in March 1685, by Prince Aazam.[89]

At the end of the year 1683, a battle took place near Almaj[90] between the Mughal army and the Marathas led by Sambhaji. In this battle Sambhaji was victorious, many Mughal soldiers were killed.

On 4th January 1684, a Maratha force appeared near Udgir. Muzfar Khan, son of Khan-i-Jahan Bahadur, was sent to drive it away.[91]

From Udgir Muzfar Khan went to Sarangpur, as a Maratha force appeared there. A severe battle took place. About seven hundred Marathas and three hundred Mughal

soldiers were killed. Muzfar Khan launched a night attack on the non-combatants and recovered goods, horses and weapons.[92] From there, in pursuit of the Marathas, he reached Songaon. Then he travelled another twenty kos and reached the village Pur(?). A battle took place there. From the Maratha side Jadhav (Dhana?) and Kakoji were wounded. Then he chased them for another ten miles. He was specially rewarded by Aurangzeb with special robe of honour and an elephant worth nine thousand rupees,[93] for his gallant pursuit.

The Mughal-Maratha Activities In Aurangabad-Ahmadnagar Region (April 1681-March 1684)

By about April-May 1681, the Maratha forces were in the vicinity of Aurangabad, ravaging the Mughal territory. Ranmast Khan, Muzfar Khan, Daud Khan and other imperial soldiers gave fight to the Marathas. Fifteen hundred Maratha soldiers were killed and many were injured but they managed to carry away the booty that they had plundered.[94]

Sambhaji's men were active near Indore, but Khan-i-Jahan Bahadur sent his son Muzfar along with the imperial men to chase them away. They chased them for about fifty miles, then a battle took place on the plains of Dharampur. Many Marathas were killed with no conclusive results.[95]

In the month of July, Aurangzeb appointed Prince Aazam in charge of the Deccan expedition[96] and was ordered to proceed to Aurangabad and control that region effectively. He was also honoured with the title of Shah. It was only in the month of November that he could reach Aurangabad and assume the command.

On 19th September 1682, Prince Muiz-ud-din arrived at Aurangabad.[97]

On 5th November, prince Muiz-ud-din was ordered to proceed to Pedgaon with instructions that no person from

the enemy side was to be allowed to enter the region.[98]

It was reported that in the last week of December 1682, the Maratha commander Hambir Rao and others marched towards Aurangabad. He was accompanied by fifteen thousand cavalry. Prince Aazam appointed Qulich Khan, Hasan Ali Khan, Sarfaraz Khan, Rao Anup Singh Hada, to his left and right wing in order to face the enemy. A battle of small arms was ensued. Nearly eight hundred Maratha soldiers lost their lives while fighting the enemy. Many were wounded. About seven hundred men of the Marathas were arrested. They also captured from the Marathas, one umbrella, one flag, many muskets and other small arms. On the Mughal side most of their soldiers were either killed or wounded. Qulich Khan received a wound from the musket shot of the Marathas. Finally the Maratha force abandoned the field.[99]

On 23rd February 1683, the Marathas appeared in the vicinity of Ahmadnagar. Tirandaz Khan was ordered to resist them.[100]

During the last week of February, a Maratha force consisting of seven thousand men was active near Jalna collecting chauth.[101] Munawwar Khan was ordered to chastise the Marathas. The Marathas carried away ten elephants of Shah Alam and destroyed some camels.[102] Aurangzeb ordered recovery of the goods from the faujdar of Jalna. Other thanedars were asked to remain alert.

In the first week of March 1683, prince Aazam sent Dilawar Khan and Munawwar Khan to protect the Pedgaon region. By about 25th March, they received intelligence that a Maratha force had arrived some thirty five kos from Pedgaon. They hastened to chase the Marathas away. A battle took place. Many Marathas were killed. According to official reports the Mughals were victors, though, all their men were also killed in the action. Therefore, the victory does not appear to be real.[103]

For the next one year the records are not extant to trace the activities of the Mughals and the Marathas in this region.

In February 1684, the Maratha sardar Timaji, along with his men, attacked Aazam's camp and the surrounding territory. Kishor Singh Hada hastened to fight. The Marathas lost the battle and Timaji was made a prisoner.[104] A small band of Marathas appeared near Patoda for collection of chauth.[105] On 31st March Gazi-ud-din Khan left Ahmadnagar for Karade-Nimone lying in Ahmadnagar district. From there he proceeded towards Poona.

The Mughal-Maratha Activities In Kolhapur-Miraj-Satara And Poona Region

In the month of November 1682, Shihab-ud-din Khan was at Chakan. He was ordered to go against the Marathas in the Poona region. From Chakan, Shihab-ud-din Khan went to Lohgadh,as a Maratha force appeared there. On 14th December, a fight took place and sixty Marathas were killed. Form there he went to Visapur, where the Marathas were busy collecting the chauth. After a forced march of about sixty miles he drove them away. From there he went to Kasur and attacked the Maratha forces, killing one hundred and fifty men. Though all his men were killed, according to official news-report, he was victorious.[106] The victory does not appear to be real. From there he destroyed eighteen villages. For all these brave activities, he received a sword and an imperial farman as a reward.

In December, Hambir Rao, the Maratha general, accompanied by five thousand cavalry and fifteen thousand foot soldiers, planned an attack on prince Aazam's camp from the rear, near Panhala. But the Prince got intelligence of this in advance. He appointed Firuz Khan, Rao Anup Singh and others as rear guards. Qulich Khan, Hasan Ali Khan, Anirudh Singh Hada and Sarfraz Khan were on his left and right flanks. A severe battle took place, resulting in the defeat of the Marathas. Firuz Khan was wounded and

Qulich Khan gave an excellent account of himself. Many Marathas were killed and wounded. Many on the side of the Mughals were also killed.[107]

A little later, in the same month, prince Aazam, who was in the territory of Bijapur marched towards Kolhapur but he was driven away beyond the Bhima river by the Maratha general Hambir Rao.[108]

In the beginning of January 1683 Shihab-ud-din Khan attacked the Maratha forces near Rajgadh, Purandar and Shivapur. He was strongly resisted by the Maratha forces. Many men were killed on either side. He was victorious. He recovered sixteen swords, forty dhups, a kettle-drum and a palanquin.[109]

For the next ten months, there do not appear to have been any noticeable activities. In the month of December 1683, the news of the Marathas becoming strong at Nira and Asti came in the Mughal camp. Ruhullah Khan and Baharamand Khan, who were already in Ahmadnagar, left at mid-night on 18th December towards Nira and Asti respectively against the enemy.[110] In the same month Ma'mur Khan gained a victory probably over the Marathas in the Poona district.

On 3rd January 1684 Shihab-ud-din Khan, accompanied by Mankoji, was in the vicinity of Raheri. He descended by way of Devghat. He ravaged Nizampur in the Maratha possession, carried away two thousand men and six thousand cattle. Then he reached Purandar. Sarbuland Khan, who was at Pedgaon, was ordered to remain alert in the absence of Shihab-ud-din Khan.[111]

On 7th January, a Maratha force appeared near Lohgadh. Fakhar-ud-din, the Mughal thanedar of Tokah Umra, rode horse and gave a fight.[112]

Baharamand Khan, who was in Asti since December, marched towards Mungi Paithan in January 1684, to disperse the Marathas.

The Mughal-Maratha Activities In Khandesh And Berar

The territory of Khandesh and Berar was always under the administrative control of the Mughal officers. But it provided an excellent ground for Maratha raiders. Often the towns of Burhanpur, Chopra and Erandol were their targets. Therefore, after the sack of Burhanpur, Aurangzeb paid particular attention to the safety of this province. In October 1682, Bahadur Khan arrived at Balaghat, with nine thousand men. Saifullah was guarding it. He was accompanied by Kanhoji Dakhani, who was familiar with that region and had two thousand men with him. He complained that the condition of the Mughal army was going from bad to worse. There was scarcity of grain and it was sold at five seers a rupee. Men had no money to buy it. [113]

In November the Marathas crossed the Manganga river and appeared in Gandapur with fifteen hundred men. The Mughal faujdar of that region begged for the help, and Tirandaz Khan went to his rescue. [114]

In January 1683 the Marathas were active in the vicinity of Kolahpur. Qasim Khan and Iraj Khan resisted the Maratha force. [115]

On 18th February 1683, Vithoji (Chavan), along with four thousand cavalry and foot soldiers, arrived near Chopra and closed the roads.I'zat Khan, the Mughal officer, appointed Padam Singh and others to his vanguard and rear guard. A battle took place. Nearly four hundred men of the Marathas were killed and wounded, with an apparent victory to the Mughals.[116] On the same date five thousand musketeers of Salabat Khan and Atish Khan were ordered to join prince Aazam's army. [117]

By March 1683, the Marathas appear to have concentrated on Berar. On 3rd March, Khan-i-Jahan Bahadur was asked to go to Berar from Naldurg as the Marathas became very active there.[118] By 12th March, the Marathas were in Balapur district for collection of chauth. The Mughal

faujdar of Balapur, Muhammad Husain, rode horse and chased them away. He captured five men of the Marathas.[119] High ranking generals of the Mughal army were being sent here one after the other. By the first week of March,Bahadur Khan arrived there. He joined Iraj Khan in chasing away the Maratha force.[120] On 19th March, Aurangzeb got the news that Nek Rai and four other commanders of Sambhaji's army with a large number of men, were ravaging the territory of Berar and were carrying away men and cattle. The subjects of these villages had migrated to Makangaon. The Mughal officer Saifullah rode horse and fought a battle near Makan. About three hundred men of the Marathas were killed and wounded. He recovered four thousand cattle and men, seventy horses and mares, but lost most of the imperial men.[121] Khan-i-Jahan Bahadur and Iraj Khan gave a fight to the Marathas near Talgaon. The Marathas escaped by way of Chanda towards Hyderabad. Then there was news of the Marathas appearing near Elichpur. Iraj Khan hastened to Elichpur. From there he was attached to prince Muiz-ud-din's army at Bidar. But Khan-i-Jahan Bahadur continued the chase of the enemy upto Mal-khandan near the border of Hyderabad.[121a]

Such have been the series of military movements of the Mughal forces in various parts of Maharashtra from May 1681 till April 1684. The ablest generals and sons of Aurangzeb were moving from one place to another with large detachments with the aim of punishing the rebels and dispersing them. Above is a diary of events as recorded by trustworthy men of Aurangzeb who mostly accompanied him during this campaign. From these movements of troops, it is quite evident that the Marathas were quite powerful in respect of military strength in a number of places of Maharashtra, like Nasik, Ahmadnagar, Nira, Asti, Mungi-Paithan, Bahadurgadh (Pedgaon), Kolhapur, Aurangabad, the territory below the Western Ghats and the Poona district.

In the various regions, the Marathas effectively opposed the Mughal forces. On many an occasion they defeated the Mughal officers, burnt their out-posts and struck terror. In Konkan they fought every inch bravely and fearlessly. Inspite of the concentration of the Mughal arms in various parts of Maharashtra, the Marathas could not be subdued. Most of the high ranking Mughal nobles were unwilling to take charge of the military operations in the Deccan. In fact some of them openly expressed the same to Aurangzeb.

Sometime in may-June 1683 Aurangzeb expressed his desire to go back to the North and Khan-i-Jahan Bahadur was appointed as chief of the Deccan. But he politely declined stating that "there is no secret about the campaign (Deccan). There is no hesitation in complying with your orders. This slave is ready to serve all the time. However, even when your Majesty, along with all the princes and umras came to the Deccan, the enemy (Marathas) did not hesitate to go as near the imperial camp as five or six kos and play mischief. How long can I keep watch over them?" This needs no further elaboration. Aurangzeb then asked Shah Alam to take over the command of the Deccan. However, Shah Alam submitted that he had already been in the Deccan once and therefore he be excused. The reluctance of senior officers sufficiently illustrates the terror of Maratha arms in the Deccan. [122]

Aurangzeb Plans A New Strategy Of War (April 1684-May 1685)

The experience of three years of campaigning, 1681, 1682 and 1683 was hardly heartening to the old Emperor. The failure of the offensive in Konkan made him more determined than ever and he drew up a new plan of action. It aimed at multi-pronged attack on Maratha towns and forts with a view to capturing and destroying them. It was going to be an all out offensive. The second objective was to capture Sambhaji dead or alive, and thus remove the very foundation of the Maratha power and resistance.

He arranged his strategy to suit these aims. He concentrated on capturing the Maratha forts. Fresh orders were issued to the army generals to march into various parts of Maharashtra. Therefore, the frequency of the Mughal attacks was increased so also their intensity. More prominent generals like Ruhullah Khan, Shihab-ud-din Khan and Khan-i-Jahan Bahadur were seen in the battle-fields. At the end of May 1684, Khan-i-Jahan Bahadur took possession of Mangalvedha, Sangola and the environs.[123] On 21st September, Shihab-ud-din Khan was sent to capture the fort of Rahiri[124] (Raigadh). Immediately on receiving the intelligence of Shihab-ud-din Khan's movement, Kavi Kalash rushed to Raigadh and reached there by 7th November.[125] The next two months were passed without any noticeable activity on the part of the Mughals. By 14th January 1685, Shihab-ud-din Khan left Poona and reached Gangoli, after descending the Bor Ghat. Kavi Kalash, who was on his trail, followed him upto Gangoli, attacked the Khan and drove him above the Ghats.

Gazi-ud-din Khan destroyed and burnt Nizampur and three other places in Sambhaji's territory. From there he reached Pachori Wadi, a village at the foot of Raigadh. He destroyed and burnt it. The Marathas, on hearing the news of presence of Gazi-ud-din Khan, went inside the fort, probably to be in readiness to attack the enemy.[126] Sambhaji, as he got the news about the ravages near Raigadh, ordered Hambir Rao and Rupaji Bhosale with fifteen thousand cavalry to attack the Khan. They attacked Gazi-ud-din Khan's camp which was four miles away from Raigadh. Many men were killed on either side. Though the Mughals claimed victory, it does not appear to be the case, as Gazi-ud-din was forced to turn away from that region to Kothlagadh.[127]

On 4th October Fakhr-ud-din Khan was appointed thanedar of Supa and Abdul Rasul Khan was appointed thanedar of Sivapur.[128] By about 9th October, cavalry and

foot soldiers of Sambhaji arrived in the vicinity of Junnar. Abdul Khair, the Mughal qil'edar of Junnar, rushed to resist the Maratha force and defeated it.[129] At this juncture Aurangzeb suspected the loyalty of some Maratha riflemen in the Mughal service. He issued an order that all those who were formerly in the service of Sambhaji should be imprisoned. Accordingly many of the musketeers were arrested in various forts.[130]

On 15th October, a certain Maratha sardar, Naroji Bhosale, with ten thousand men, arrived at Satara. Gazi-ud-din Khan, who was at Sirval, rode the horse. A fierce battle took place. Two hundred Marathas and seventy Mughal soldiers were killed. Many men were wounded on both the sides, but the battle ended without any results.[131]

On 25th October, Bakhshi Ruhullah Khan was sent to punish the rebels.[132] It is neither known in which direction he left nor there is any further trace of his activities. However, by 16th March 1685, he left for Bijapur.

By the end of October, a Maratha force was in the vicinity of Supa. Sayyid Oghlan rushed to resist it. Many men were killed and wounded and the Maratha force was driven away.[133]

Kothlagadh lost to the Mughals

In the month of November, the Marathas lost the precious fort of Kothla to the Mughals. The Qazi of Rahiri wrote to Aurangzeb, 'Kothlagadh is a very important fort and whosoever has control over it rules Talkonkan'. His assessment was undoubtedly correct.

Qazi Muhammad and Abdul Qadir, accompanied by Ramaji, a zamindar from the region of Kothlagadh, drew up plans to take this fort. Their march commenced through Telyaghat. On 7th November, they observed that a large number of men from the fort were going outside. Immediately they set on march and arrived near the fort the next day. Abdul Qadir, with his men, was asked to remain in

ambush. At night the remaining people reached the lower gate of the fort and shouted 'open the door the men have come back'. The Marathas, not realising the mischief, opened the door. A fight took place. The Marathas outnumbered them, and as they were about to be driven away, Abdul Qadir with his men arrived there. Shortly Mankoji Pandhre, the Mughal thanedar also reached there. The Mughals got the possession of the fort on 16th November. And Aurangzeb was presented with a golden key of the gates of Kothlagadh.[134] The fort was named as Miftah-ul-Fatuh and Qazi Hyder was rewarded with seven thousand rupees.

Immediately, i.e. on 19th November, a fresh Marahta force arrived near the fort and laid siege to it. A total blockade of the region was effected. A battle of muskets and arrows took place. The condition of the Mughal qil'edar Abdul Qadir became precarious. There was neither grain, nor any ammunition in the fort as the same was burnt away by the Marathas before they vacated the fort. The besieging Marathas did not allow any reinforcement to reach the fort.

Abdul Aziz Khan, qil'edar of Junnar sent his son Abdul Khan to Kothlagadh. On his arrival near the fort, he saw Naroji (Naro Trimbak), a commander of Sambhaji, who had blocked all the roads leading to the fort. A fight took place in the valley between the two. Mankoji and Radandaz Khan joined Abdul Khan. Naro Trimbak was killed and his head was severed and sent to Aurangzeb.[135] Inspite of this failure the Marathas continued their struggle to capture the fort.

By the end of December, another battle took place between the rival parties without any conclusive results. The Marathas continued their efforts to blockade the region. The Mughal qil'edar became desperate. Abdul Aziz Khan was asked to supply him grains, yet it appears that he could not reach the fort.[136] Then Marhmat Khan, who was at

Navlakhumra,was ordered to go [137] to Kothlagadh. He gave a fight to the Maratha force [138] consisting of seven thousand men and was victorious. In Arpil, a Maratha force consisting of about seven hundred men, well equipped with arms, arrived near Kothlagadh. They attacked the fort with arrows and about two hundred men climbed it. Abdul Karim the Mughal qil'edar, gave a good account of himself. Ninety Marathas and fifteen Mughals were killed and the Maratha force was defeated. The Marathas gave up the blockade of the fort by the end of April 1685. [139]

While the struggle for Kothlagadh continued from November 1684 till April 1685, the army movements of the Mughals in other regions were quite accelerated. The main objective behind these movements was to defend the territory from frequent attacks by the Maratha troops on various Mughal outposts, thanas and forts.

On 1st December 1684 Bahramand Khan was ordered to go to Sirval in place of Gazi-ud-din Khan. He was accompanied by a cavalry force of three thousand two hundred men. [140] And Radandaz Khan from Karde Nimone [141] was ordered to join Bahramand Khan. During December Katya (Tatya?) Rao, a commander of Sambhaji, appeared in Sinner and Bhagor villages. But the Mughal thanedars Muhammad Khalil and Gobindrao did not resist the Marathas. Lutufullah Khan was ordered to hasten for their rescue. [142] Similar orders were issued to I'tqad Khan in order to chastise the Marathas from Sinnar and Bhagor [143] region.

On 12th December, a Maratha force appeared near Ramsej. The Mughal officer Akram Khan gave a fight. About two hundred Maratha soldiers and almost all Mughal soldiers were killed. [144] Sambhaji's men arrived near Bela. (Velhe is eight miles east of Rajgadh.) But the Mughal soldiers did not offer any resistance. [145]

During the same month, we notice that besides attacking the Mughal territories in Maharashtra the Marathas marched

into Karnataka. They harried the Mughal officers posted there and tried to capture their forts also. Dadaji Kakada, a commander of Sambhaji, arrived near the fort of Belhattur with three thousand cavalry and two thousand foot soldiers. The zamindars of Srirangapattam and an ally of the Mughals, with seven thousand cavalry and fifteen thousand foot soldiers, resisted the Maratha force. A battle took place near the fort of Belhattur. Dadaji Kakada and his son were killed. Timaji, another sardar of the Marathas, was wounded and Bhimaji, brother of Dadaji, was taken prisoner. In all seven thousand men were killed and many were wounded. The fort of Belhattur remained under the Mughal possession.[146]

In the beginning of new year, (2nd January 1685), Sambhaji marched towards Parner to attack Bahramand Khan. Immediately I'tqad Khan, accompanied by Mirza Khan and an army of two thousand seven hundred eighty men,was ordered to rush there. He left for Parner by making night marches.[147] The Marathas were active near Sangamner. They destroyed the region and carried away cattle. The Mughal thanedar did not resist them.[148]

Radandaz Khan, the thanedar of Supa, informed Aurangzeb on 7th January that the Marahtas were very active in that region and it was not possible for him to resist them with his small contingent. Aurangzeb ordered Lutufullah Khan to send his troops to Supa.[149] Shortly, a Marahta force consisting of ten thousand men arrived near Poona. Radandaz Khan and Qamar-ud-din dashed against it. The ensuing skirmish proved indecisive.[150] Again the Marathas were active in the Poona district in the first week of January 1685. Fakhr-ud-din Khan, the Mughal thanedar, gave a fight. Many men were killed on both the sides. From here the Maratha force turned towards Navlakh Umra.[151] Abdul Khair, who was the Mughal thanedar of Junnar, informed Aurangzeb about the presence of the Maratha troops in his region. Atish Khan, who was sent to Poona,

was immediately directed to proceed to Navlakh Umra to assist Abul Khair.[152] He was accompanied by Sayyid Izat Khan, Mir Bakhshi of Shah Alam's army, alsong with five hundred men and another two hundred men from the army of prince Mu'iz-ud-din.[153] But nothing seems to have occurred, inspite of readiness of the Mughal troops.

In the same month, the Marathas were active near Karde-Nimone, Khoja Hamid,the Mughal officer of the place, had a very small force with him.[154] On 21st January, a Maratha force consisting of seven hundred cavalry men appeared near Malthan, a place twelve miles from Karde-Nimone.

Khoja Hamid rode horse. But by the time he could confront the enemy, the Marathas had moved to Sirur. They carried away cattle. Jivaji, the brother of Mankoji, the thanedar of Shikarpur, came to his help. Subsequently he returned to Karde-Nimone. Shortly afterwards, a small band of fifty Marathas appeared near Rahugaon, which is fourteen miles away from Karde Nimone.[155] And in the beginning of February 1685, Khandoji, a commander of Sambhaji, marched on Sarasgaon and laid siege to it. On 7th February, Khoja Hamid rode horse and reached Sarasgaon. A battle took place. Finally the Marathas gave up the fight and deserted the field. They were chased upto the Bhima river.[156]

By the middle of January 1685, the Marathas appeared in the vicinity of Parner. Gaznafar Khan, accompanied by seven hundred cavalrymen, marched against them. A battle took place. Lutufullah Khan, Abdul Karim, and Khoja Hamid were asked to co-operate with each other and fight the Marathas[157] unitedly.

The Marathas were active in Sirval. Bahadur Khan was ordered to proceed to Sirval and assist Bahramand Khan in defeating the Marathas.[158] Bahramand Khan had reached half way between Karde-Nimone and Shikarpur in the pursuit of the Marathas, when he received the news that the

Marathas had carried away food grains and seventeen hundred cattle from Sirval.[159] Immediately Bahramand Khan was ordered to go back to Sirval.[160]

In January, a Maratha force appeared in the vicinity of Qadirabad. Sayyid Oghlan and Multafit Khan, the Bakhshi of Shah Alam, along with a contingent of one thousand men, was ordered to chastise the Marathas.[161] By 31st January, Sayyid Oghlan returned and Lutufullah Khan, who was sent to Qadirabad, was ordered to stay back on the bank of the Bhima.[162]

The Marathas appeared near Parenda. I'tqad Khan was ordered to chase them away. But as he was sick, Gaznafar Khan proceeded.[163]

Bahramand Khan attacked a Maratha force near Mulher. It was carrying away men and cattle. A battle took place. The Marathas lost many men in dead and wounded. But equally big was the loss sustained by the Mughals. Almost all their soldiers were killed[164] in the action.

The Marathas were very active near Nasik in January. Atish Khan, Ilayar Beg from Radandaz Khan's army who was at Karde Nimone, Marhamat Khan from Navlakh Umra and Muhammad Khalil from Sivner were ordered to go to Nasik.[165] In the first week of February, Munawwar Khan and Akram Khan, the Mughal thanedar of Nasik, who were left behind to protect the bungahs, marched against the Marathas.[166] From there the Marathas pretended to go to Aurangabad, but went to Khandesh, towards Baglan. Munawwar Khan, with two-third army of Fazail Khan, went out in their pursuit. Radandaz Khan and Marhamat Khan chased them into Khandesh. Bahramand Khan also reached there.[167]

On 6th February 1685, Gazi-ud-din Khan went to Nasik to chastise the Marathas.[168] It appears from the movements of the commanders of the Mughal army that the Marathas were very active in the Nasik region. The best generals of the

Mughal army were ordered to be present in that region in order to safeguard the territory from the Maratha invasion.

In February the Marathas reached near Hanumantgadh. The Mughal thanedar, Bahram Khan did not resist them. But Muhammad Ismail gave them a battle. Many men were killed on both the sides.[169]

On 25th February, Rana Jai Singh, a commander under Sambhaji, attacked Parenda with his men. Marhamat Khan, the Mughal officer, was ordered to resist him. From there the Maratha commander seems to have turned towards Indapur and Adgaon. The Mughal thanedar of Bhalwani gave him a fight. Rana Jai Singh was reported to be slain[170] in the action.

On 27th February a Maratha force was passing by way of Aundhapatta. Gaznafar Khan hastened from the river Ganga (Manganga) and attacked the Marathas near Palashkhede. On 28th February a fight took place. Many of the Marathas and most of the Mughal soldiers were either killed or wounded.[171]

Another Maratha force reached Chandan Vandan. Amanullah Khan, the Mughal commander, rode the horse. A fight took place. Many Marathas were killed. The Mughals recovered twenty-five mares, twenty muskets, two flags and a kettle drum.[172]

In the first week of March, on the orders of Aurangzeb, Ruhullah Khan arrived at Mangalvedha.

The Marathas were active near Shikarpur. The Mughal thanedar resisted them.[173] Aurangzeb planned his march towards Pedgaon.

Sayyid 'Izat Khan was appointed faujdar of Junnar in place of 'Abdul Aziz Khan with an additional force of five hundred men from Ruhullah Khan's army.[174]

In April, some new appointments of the Mughal officers were made. Raja Manohardas was appointed as qil'edar of

Mulher, Jan Nisar Khan as qil'edar of Gulbarga and Ahivant Gadh and Muzfar Khan as thanedar of Sivner.

During the first week of April, the Mughals suffered heavy losses[175] in a skirmish near Supa.

The Marathas were active near Nandurbar and Sholapur. Sardar Miyan Muhammad was asked to chastise them near Sholapur. On 22nd April, a fight took place, apparently without any results.[176]

During the middle of May, Gazi-ud-din Khan sent his son Mujahid Khan to chastise the Marathas near Pratapgadh, which was reported to be burnt.[177] From there Mujahid was sent to Satara as Hanmantrao and others were active in that region.[178]

By the end of May the Marathas were also active near Nanded.[179]

Thus the year from April 1684 to May 1685 was full with hectic military activities. The Marathas appeared to be quite strong and they harried the Mughal soldiers in every nook and cornet of Maharashtra. Sometimes they just appeared near a Mughal post, at others they attacked it. Many a time the Mughal officers did not show sufficient courage to face them. During this period the Marathas lost a number of their army commanders, but the war was not affected adversely on account of it. In fact, the activities during the year point to the comparative strength of the Marathas and explain why Aurangzeb decided to lay off their territory and undertake a campaign against Bijapur without conquering Sambhaji's territory.

During this period, the Mughals attempted to blockade the supplies of foodgrains which were coming to Sambhaji from Ahmadabad. Kartalab Khan, the faujdar of Ahmadabad and Surat, was given strict instructions to prevent the supplies from that region.[180] Muhammad Husain Qazi of Cheul was ordered not to allow any food grains to pass into Sambhaji's territory. These measures were obviously not

quite effective.

An Opportunity Wasted

From May 1681 to April 1685 Aurangzeb's army was penetrating into every possible part of Maharashtra, capturing as many forts as it could and occupying several places. This was the theme of these four years of Aurangzeb's stay in the Deccan. He tried to create chaotic conditions. All measures were being adopted to induce people of Maharashtra to join the Mughal service. Extensive use of bribes was made by the Mughal sardars. Added to it, there were forced conversions to Islam. These new converts were being granted respectable positions in the Mughal service. This induced many others to join Islam. Every effort was being made to weaken the Maratha government.

But all this did not yield the desired offect from Aurangzeb's point of view. Much to his dismay, the Mughal forces were being defeated everywhere and the 'infidels' as he liked to call the Marathas, stood their ground. Their technique of warfare was new and strange to his armies. His armies were not trained and accustomed to fight in the hilly tracts of the Deccan. They excelled in their trade, only if the battles were fought in the plains. They had to encounter many difficulties and new problems. Foremost were the problems of transportation and conveyance of artillery. Having spent four years in Maharashtra without any tangible results, Aurangzeb made a major change in his policy in respect of the conquest of the Maratha land. He decided to subdue first the other two Deccani powers, viz. the Sultan of Bijapur and the Sultan of Golkonda.

From the middle of 1684, Aurangzeb ordered his armies to march towards Bijapur and Golkonda and slowly the wheels of the Mughal artillery started rolling in the direction of Bijapur. His prominent generals were given orders to capture Bijapur and Golkonda.

However, from his subsequent actions, it is quite clear that

he planned a massive campaign against the Marathas after the destruction of the two suspects viz. Sikandar Adil Shah of Bijapur and Qutb Shah of Golkonda, who were secretly helping Sambhaji against the Mughal Emperor.

Aurangzeb and the two Islamic States of the Deccan

From 1681, Aurangzeb was busy, in preliminary preparations for his invasion of the two Muslim states. On 13th July 1681, he wrote a friendly letter to Sharza Khan,a general in Bijapuri army. He was earnestly called upon to cooperate with the Mughal generals, who were entrusted with the task of defeating Sambhaji and recovering the territory from him. It was further stated, "The Emperor is going to the Deccan to punish Sambha and wrest the Bijapuri forts from him. Don't be alarmed but assist Khan-i-Jahan in his work." And a similar appeal was preferred by Shahar Banu, a Bijapuri princess, wedded in the Mughal house. [181]

Inspite of this nothing seems to have happened for the next two years.

On 13th November 1683, Aurangzeb arrived at Ahmadnagar. Here he planned the campaign of Bijapur. The Mughal plan of action was to establish a number of outposts in the Bijapur territory in north-west under Prince Aazam and Khan-i-Jahan in the north-east. In June 1684, Shah Alam arrived at Ahmadnagar from Konkan and he was ordered to undertake the Bijapur campaign.

On 30th March 1684, a farman was despatched to Sikandar Adil Shah urging him to give the Mughal army necessary supplies, a free passage and keep a force of five to six thousand ready to reinforce the Mughal army. He was also warned to keep off from Sambhaji.

Neither the Bijapuri king, nor his courtiers took serious cognizance of the 'orders' from Aurangzeb. This poor response to his call of action hastened Aurangzeb's march against the king of Bijapur.

Aurangzeb was born a Muslim, he died a Muslim and lived as a true Muslim. The mission of his life was to carry out into practice the tenets of Islam, more especially to propagate that religion everywhere and rule the people according to Islamic Law. It was quite natural for him to destroy and wipe out all that was non-Islamic. This was the primary concern of his life. This explains Aurangzeb's motive in waging a life-long struggle against the Rajputs and the Marathas. To the modern age, his ideology might sound inconsistent and irrational. But he was clear in his mind as to what he aimed at. Contemporary events and the historical records bear withness to his design and missionary like zeal in carrying out the same till the termination of his life. If this was so, then what was his motive in invading and destroying the two Deccani states, which were not only Islamic, but had also agreed to accept the suzerainty of the Mughal Emperor.

Therefore, it is essential to have a closer look at Aurangzeb's life and also an analysis of his Islamic faith. No doubt he was a firm believer in Islamic faith, but in his own way, he believed in the superiority of Suni sect and despised as much the Shia sect. To a great extent in this respect he was self-centred man, and though he spoke about the spread of Islam everywhere, he confined his activities to propagation of the Suni faith alone. Whenever he got an opportunity to do away with the followers of the Shia sect, he did so unhesitatingly. What he longed for was the Suni Muslim rule through out the length and breadth of India. Even within his courtiers, he accorded a preferential treatment. Those who were Sunis, definitely benefited more than their deserving Shia brethren. This particular trait of Aurangzeb's mind, which was more often seen in practice, explains to a great extent his intentions in invading the two Islamic states of the Deccan. Aurangzeb, who favoured Suni rule everywhere, noticed that both the Deccani states of Bijapur as well as Golkonda were followers of the Shia sect. This was the primary motive of his invasion of these states.

But he very cleverly camouflaged it, when a deputation consisting of renowned religious men of Bijapur awaited on him at the time of his actual invasion of Adil Shahi kingdom. He was confronted with a question by the deputation that if both the states were Islamic states, then would it be proper on his part to destroy the other one which was weaker than his own. In fact did Quranic injunctions permit him to do such an act of aggression against another Muslim State? Aurangzeb, with his usual shrewdness and tact, avoided the basic issue in question and without revealing his real motive, pointed out that, the invasion was a punishment, as the ruler of the state was actively but secretly helping an infidel, further, he has been found, incapable of governing people in accordance with the law of Islam. In addition to the misfortune of these Muslim states being Shia, they did not co-operate in the past with the Emperors of Delhi.

In the past, the Mughal Emperors always tried to destroy these kingdoms, but they were not successful. More recently in 1679, a fresh attempt was made to conquer Bijapur, but the Mughal general was defeated and had to go back in utter disappointment. Now he found a ready excuse for invading these states, as they engaged, so he believed, in helping the infidel viz. the Maratha king, Sambhaji. His grievance was more deep about Bijapuri ruler than the ruler of Golkonda. But the acts of both of them greatly offended him. At a later date the two envoys, Sidi Mas'ud Khan and Sayyid Makhadum of Bijapur, were sent to the Mughal court for enquiring about "Why Aurangzeb made war upon them?" To this Aurangzeb replied that his action was directed not so much against them as against Sambhaji. [182]

The condition of the Bijapur court had worsened. Internal feuds, personal jealousies and rivalries had created an atmosphere of mutual distrust and animosity.The main pillar of strength the nobility-was a house divided against itself. Peace was no more possible . Sidi Mas'ud had retired in

November 1683 after being prime minister for five years. He was succeeded by Aga Khusrau, but shortly death deprived him of that post. The king of Bijapur, Sikandar Adil, was a young boy and could hardly match the diplomacy and statecraft of his veteran courtiers. Sharza Khan was entrusted with the task of the defence of Bijapur. He had experience of fighting with the Mughals in the past and got on to the job of organizing the defences. He invited Pam Naik of Wagingera to join him with two other Bedar leaders. A similar request was made to Srinivas Desai of Gadag. A letter was despatched to Khem Sawant of Kudal that he should remain friendly with Sambhaji and should not help the Mughals, and keep his troops in readiness to descend the ghats.[183] Meanwhile he sent a spirited reply to Aurangzeb demanding the return of tribute and territory that had been extracted in the past from the Adil Shahi Government. and the withdrawal of the Mughal outposts from his territory. He wished that the Mughal troops should march only through Sambhaji's territory. Finally he also refused to banish Sharza Khan, which was one of the more important demands made by Aurangzeb.[184]

This was the last straw to break the camel's back. Hostilities were declared openly. Wheels of the Mughal artillery started rolling in the direction of Bijapur. The Mughal generals were ordered to plant outposts on the border. And in 1685 a regular war against Bijapur had commenced.

Meanwhile Sikandar Adil Shah wrote a pathetic letter beseeching Qutb Shah of Golkonda to come to his rescue and send some troops. A similar request was made to the Maratha king. The defence of the capital was entrusted to Chintu Chimana, Sharza Khan and Abdur-rauf took the command of the field army.

On 21st February 1685 a Maratha division under Melgiri Pandit arrived at Bijapur. On 28th March, Khwaja Abdul Rahman, the Mughal envoy, was attacked by the Bijapuri

troops. On 1st April 1685, the first trenches were dug by the Mughals in order to lay siege to Bijapur. The Mughal preparations for attack were quite extensive. Two thousand nine hundred barkandaz, one hundred and ten pieces of artillery, forty jajhal, one hundred fifty four shutarnel, 7561 maunds of gun powder and 23027 men were brought in at the line of the siege.[185] Ruhullah Khan and Qasim Khan opened trenches towards Shahpur, a place half a mile away from the fort wall. Khan-i-Jahan entrenched himself near Zuhrapur in the west, and Aazam's supporting army was posted far away in the south-west, on the banks of the Tungabhadra.

In early April Sharza Khan launched an attack on the Mughal army.[186] It was estimated that Sharza Khan commanded twenty thousand men. During the encounter prince Aazam received some wounds.[187] On 24th May, Aurangzeb arrived at Sholapur. On 29th May, Khan-i-Jahan was sent to Indi to keep a watch on the Hyderabad road. On 14th June prince Aazam arrived at the siege line and took over the command of the army.

The Bijapuris were trying their best to keep up the resistance on all fronts. A Bijapuri force consisting of thirty thousand men was fighting the siege-line, whereas another force, equally strong, was out ravaging and burning nearby Mughal territory. This went on for nearly a year. The Bijapuri forces kept on fighting courageously. Many a time they attacked the siegelines and inflicted casualties on the Mughal lines. Sikandar Adil Shah's efforts in another direction now bore fruit and on 10th June, Sidi Mas'ud arrived at Bijapur with his troops. On 14th August, a Golkonda force under Ambaji Pandit arrived and on 10th December another Maratha force arrived. This force was diverted to ravage the Mughal territory.[188]

On 2nd November 1685, the Mughal army captured an elevated place where they could raise a gun platform to mount their guns and thus the siege lines were pressed closer to the fort walls. On 14th June 1686, Aurangzeb left

Sholapur and on 3rd July arrived near Rasulpura, a suburb west of the fort. The siege was now pressed hard with the result that the supplies to the besieged were cut off. Countless men and horses died in the fort. Inspired by this news the Mughals made an assault. But it failed. Much losses were sustained by the Mughal forces.[189] But the Mughals remained steady in their attack, and stopped all outside help to the besieged. With continuous fighting the garrison was reduced to the strength of a bare thousand men.[190] At last forced by circumstances, two Bijapuri generals, Sharza Khan and Abdur-rauf, waited on Firuz Jang for the terms of capitulations. Next night, Sikandar Adil Shah himself paid a visit and agreed to surrender the fort. Thus Sunday, the 12th September 1686[191] saw the downfall of Adil Shahi dynasty and Sikandar Adil Shah was made a virtual prisoner.

Qutb Shahi of Golkonda Liquidated

In the past, invasions of Golkonda by the Mughal armies in 1656, 1679 and 1685 under various generals were unsuccessful. And every failure made Aurangzeb more and more uneasy about Qutb Shahi Kings. But he showed utmost patience. However, these defeats were not forgotten. Since then he had started listing down the sins committed by Abul Hasan, the ruler of Golkonda. Besides other things, he was also a follower of the Shia sect. The foremost sin of Abul Hasan, was appointment of Madanna and Akkanna, the two brahmins as his ministers and having given supreme control of the state into the hands of these two infidels. These kafirs, in turn, extended active help to infidels like Shivaji and Sambhaji by making a pact of mutual defence. This was certainly not to the taste and liking of Aurangzeb. The officers of Qutb Shah had given an offence to the Mughals by seizing the districts of Malkhed, Sedum and some other places which belonged to the Mughal province of Bidar. The war indemnity promised in the treaty of April 1656, and the tributes of two lacs hons a year, had fallen in arrears. Above all, during the Mughal invasions of Bijapur in 1685,

according to Aurangzeb, this Sultan, had the audacity of sending troops to Bijapur in order to continue its efforts against the invading Mughal army.

If helping a brethren in distress in the absence of which the destruction was a certainty and which also meant eventually bringing noose closer to once own neck, then Abul Hasan was certainly guilty of it. King Abul Hasan, publicly allowed all types of sins in his kingdom, like public taverns, gambling houses, etc. and had himself indulged in excessive sensual pleasures. This was in the opinion of Aurangzeb, contrary to the Islamic law and practice, therefore he deserved all the punishment. But inspite of all this, there was no immediate cause for Aurangzeb to launch an attack. Therefore, he went to an incredible extent in his design and instructed Mirza Muhammad, the Mughal ambassador at Qutb Shahi Court, to play a deliberate mischief, so that the Mughal armies, which were kept in readiness, could march against Golkonda.

Evil was further aggravated when a letter of the Qutb Shah written to Adil Shah of Bijapur sometime before 1st March 1685, [192] was intercepted by the Mughals. In this letter he had stressed upon joint action by Sikandar Adil, Sambhaji and himself against the Mughals. He had pleaded that this pact of common defence would be very useful in case Aurangzeb attacked anyone of them, as the ultimate aim of Aurangzeb was to destroy everyone of them. Therefore it was in the interest of each one to help the other. Thus by the end of March 1685 he had sent three thousand men and one lac hons to Sikandar Adil Shah. Aurangzeb, after knowing the secret designs of the Qutb Shah, ordered Shah Alam with his vast army to march against Golkonda. Khan-i-Jahan was ordered to join him from his outpost at Indi. They were opposed by the Golkonda army near Malkhed, headed by prominent generals like Mir Muhammad Ibrahim, Shaikh Minhaj and Rustumrao, the

gallant nephew of Madanna. The march of the Mughal armies was intercepted by this force.

In the month of August, Jan Nisar Khan took the fort of Sedum[193] without any opposition. But subsequently, a battle took place and Shaikh Minhaj and Rustom Rao were wounded, and their men fled back to Hyderabad. Mir Muhammad, the commander-in-chief of the Golkonda army, had secretly joined the Mughals. By October 1685, the Mughal army commenced its march towards Hyderabad.[194] Abul Hasan, after getting the intelligence, fled to the fort of Golkonda. People were panic stricken and confusion prevailed in the city. By about 8th October, Shah Alam posted his troops in the city. Qutb Shah begged for terms of peace. He was prepared to pay two lacs of hons as tribute and one crore and twenty lac hons as peshkash. He was prepared to give up his claim over Malkhed and Sedum. Finally, he agreed to remove Madanna and Akanna from their posts.[195]

Sometime in March 1686, Abul Hasan cut off the head of Madanna and sent it to Shah Alam as a proof of his own obedience and submission.[196] Till October-November 1686, the amount of peshkash was not paid. Immediately, Aurangzeb sent his men for recovery. Once again in December Qutb Shah begged for morcy, but the appeal was rejected. On 29th January 1687, the Mughal army started digging trenches two miles away from Hyderabad. Qutb Shah retreated to the Golkonda fort and was besieged by the Mughal army.

In January-February 1687, he surrendered Basavapattan and Hyderabad (Bhaganagar) to Aurangzeb.[197] The Mughal army, at this time had most prominent generals to lay siege to the Golkonda fort, to mention a few, they were prince Mu'azzam, Asad Khan, Ruhullah Khan, Mahabat Khan, Raja Bhim Singh, I'tqad Khan, Qulich Khan, and many others. On 7th February, the trenches were dug and the siege work was accelerated, even then the siege continued

for the next eight months. The garrison fought bravely, almost day and night.

On 16th May the commander-in-chief of the Mughal army Firuz-Jang made an attempt to take the fort by escalade, but he failed miserably. The garrison gave a sound rebuff. In addition to it there was general confusion in the Mughal artillery on account of Saf Shikan Khan quarrelling with Firuz-Jang. And then came utter famine. The Mughal camp was in the grip of starvation. The Golkonda forces joined by the Marathas prevented the movement of grain into the Mughal camp. The misery was further aggrevated by excessive rain-fall in June. Everywhere there was mud and slush and no movement of any type could be effected. The siege work was damaged and lost. The Golkonda soldiers, grabbed the opportunity and attacked the horrified Mughal troops. Every one deserted their allotted post. Soon Aurangzeb sent reinforcement and some transport elephants. On 16th June, Lutufullah Khan, with an armed contingent, was sent to carry on the struggle. Meanwhile, Abul Hasan, through the captive Mughal officers beseeched Aurangzeb for peace and promised to pay one crore of rupees as an indemnity. But Aurangzeb rejected this offer.

On 20th June, a fresh attack was planned. Mines were laid and men were kept in readiness for an assault. But to the misfortune of the Mughals, the explosion blew the outer part of the fort and thus killed the Mughal soldiers, who were waiting in readiness for an assault. About eleven hundred men were killed. The defenders fell upon the Mughals and added to the confusion and killing. Firuz-Jang rushed to the scene of disaster with a large contingent. There was a fight between the two armies in order to overpower each other. Firuz-Jang, Rustum Khan and Dalpat Rao were wounded in the skirmish.[198]

"The men could not advance one inch in the face of the murderous discharge of muskets, rockets, chain shot and bombs."[199] Such was the disasterous condition of the

Mughal army. Aurangzeb rushed to avert the defeat and disaster. Asad Khan and Kambakhsh brought reinforcement. The siege, which was initially considered to be a matter of a few days, became a challenge to the Mughal prestige and power. Even immense wealth was spent but the siege dragged on. All hope of taking Golkonda by escalade or breaching the fort wall had disappeared. On 7th July Prince Aazam was appointed commander-in-chief, in place of Firuz-Jang. New platforms for guns were raised and the siege work commenced freshly. Thus the eight months were lost without success being in sight for the Mughals. Then the month of September, brought a change in the situation. Abdullah Pani, an Afghan soldier and a trusted general of Qutb Shah, deserted his master and joined the Mughals.

He opened the poster gate of the fort. On 21st September 1687, Ruhullah Khan crossed the breached area and entered the fort unchallenged. Prince Aazam, with his soldiers joined him and thus at last the victory was proclaimed, though Abdur Razzaq Khan Lari, a most loyal noble of Qutb Shah gave a most gallant and heroic fight almost single handedly till the last. He killed many of the Mughal soldiers and fell wounded and unconscious while defending his master most faithfully. Abul Hasan was conveyed to prince Aazam's tent and then presented before Aurangzeb. He was made a virtual prisoner and finally lodged in the fort of Daulatabad.[200]

Thus after a great bloodshed and unbearable human sufferings, Aurangzeb succeeded in establishing the Mughal rule over the dominions of the Qutb Shah. After a large scale massacare he uprooted the only surviving Shia state in order to establish the superiority of the Suni sect.

Military Preparations of Sambhaji (1685-88) And Return of Aurangzeb to Maharashtra

Aurangzeb's design to capture Golkonda and Bijapur brought in a priceless opportunity for Sambhaji to prepare

himself against the impending danger of the fresh Mughal invasion. Evacuation of Matharashtra by the Mughal armies brought great respite to the Maratha arms. Now was the time for them to make up military deficiency, strengthen the forts and awaken the people everywhere against the Mughal invasion.

Did Sambhaji utilize this precious opportunity to his advantage? Did he strengthen his defences? Or did he raise more battalions or units of people against the danger of the Mughal invasion which was looming large on the horizon? Having had to face the Mughal troops during past four years, what fresh steps did he take to avert the calamity, as Aurangzeb was sure to launch an attack on his kingdom again. The eventual return of Aurangzeb with his victorious armies, was perhaps going to be a more dreadful affair from the point of view of the survival of the Maratha state. Therefore Sambhaji had no other alternative or option but to make use of this opportunity. But we notice, after careful examination of several events of the period, that Sambhaji did not make use of this period or the opportunity towards the achievement of any fruitful results. He hardly paid any attention to improve the state of affairs in order to give effective resistance to the Mughal armies.

Form April 1685, the time when Aurangzeb left Ahmadnagar for Sholapur in order to capture Bijapur, till his return to Maharashtra in December, 1688 that is, in a period of three and half years, there was not much of Mughal activity in Maharashtra. Most of the Mughal troops had left for Bijapur in March 1684. There were not many prominent generals of the Mughal army left behind. The only names we come across of the Mughal nobles are Shihab-ud-din Khan and Ma'tabar Khan. Their accomplishments during this period were confined to capturing a fort or two or ravaging a few villages. Even the court historians like Khafi Khan and Saqi-Must'ad Khan found themselves at a

loss to credit big victories to the Mughal forces in Maharashtra during this period.

What did Sambhaji do during this period of four years when the Mughal armies were not present in Maharashtra? What was it that occupied most of his time and energy?

It is difficult to say anyting firmly, or point out to any particular historical record from which we can authoritatively state about Sambhaji's activities during this period. There are only a few Marathi letters extant which throw some light on his activities during this period.

Sambhaji was being constantly kept informed about the Mughal activities. Shankraji Narayan, Sambhaji's ablest administrator, wrote a letter to Krishnaji Dadaji Prabhu Deshpande of village Kari, Vadtumbi, Koral and Koralkhind in Rohid Khore.'The enemy (the Mughals) was approaching the Maval territory.' He was asked to keep watch posts at Koral Khind, Dhavla ghat and Mandardev. He was asked to be in touch with Rajgadh for securing necessary help and assistance. He was well encouraged to defeat the enemy. [201]

Chhatrapati Sambhaji, by a rajapatra issued in the name of Nagoji, Mukundji, Vithoji, Rauloji and Tukoji Yeshwantrao Ghorpade, highly appreciated their bravery in the Karnatak region. They showed loyalty to the Chhatrapati and were ever willing to sacrifice their lives. All these brave soldiers were asked to serve the Chhatrapati with utmost loyalty and highest sacrifice. [202]

From time to time Sambhaji made some efforts to secure the support of various Deshmukhs, who virtually controlled the unmustered militia in the country. When prince Mu'azam and Shihab-ud-din Khan entered Konkan, Sambhaji sought the support of the Deshmukh of Wai and his armed men. He laid emphasis on the requirement of well prepared armed men to fight Aurangzeb. He expressed high hopes of defeating the Mughals, if he could succeed in enlarging his army. [202 a] Similar efforts were made by Kavi Kalash in

1684. He wrote a letter to the Deshmukh of Kanad Khore, the concluding lines of which provide us with a striking example of political thinking then existing in Maharashtra, when it said "Last year the Chhatrapati sent Bajaji Navadkar to you. Your object was not served and you were not satisfied. Therefore, I requested the Chhatrapati who now orders you to see him. At this time all the vatandars should be united and the enemy should be punished."[202b]

As the efforts to unite all the Deshmukhs, Desais and Vatandars were being made, some of them deserted Sambhaji and joined Aurangzeb. There were some prominent Maratha Sardars who did so. But Sambhaji did not give up the hope. He was constantly making efforts to bring them back. In 1685, Sarjerao Jedhe had joined the Mughals. On the 5th October, Sambhaji informed him that "if attacked, neither you nor the Mughals will last even for two days. And they (the Mughals) could be destroyed along with you."[202c] Thus Sambhaji did not hesitate in threatening the disloyal elements. But then the political objects are not always attained by threats alone. Like a good statesman, he did not lose sight of the need of winning over the Jedhes in a tactful way and through green promises. The Maratha sardar was persuaded to come back. Here the emphasis was laid on the impending danger to the Swaraj. Those people, who had joined the Mughal service with certain material expectations, were reminded that the Mughals were foreigners to this land. Acceptance of service under them showed consent to slavery. Thus the self-respect of the Marahtas was being aroused. They were constantly reminded about their own king, their own nation and their own religion.

But inspite of all this Sarjerao Jedhe did not join the Marathas till February 1687. However, the attempts to bring him under the Maratha banner were never given up. Nilkanth Moreshwar, the chief minister of Sambhaji, wrote to Sarjerao Jedhe in February 1687 saying, "You have

joined the Mughal service. But what is there that attracts you so much? If you rejoin the Marahtas you would be well rewarded. If you feel hesitant in coming back because you have joined the Muslims, you should not feel so. You are being pardoned."[202d] Here we find clear thinking on the part of the Marathas in respect of matters like recalling people who had joined the alien service. On 4th March, he was extended complete protection [202e] and was asked to remain loyal to the Chhatrapati.

Similar attempts were made by Sambhaji to infuse the spirit of loyalty and love for Swaraj in some of the Desais of Karnatak. In 1686 the Moghe Prabhu Desai of Hukeri was advised by Kavi Kalash to have loyalty towards the Chhatrapati and to the person whose food he was eating. "The Desais should know," wrote Kavi Kalash, "there is no necessity of compromising with the Mughals and disloyal people. Display your good intentions towards the kingdom."[202f] Such instances, as we have seen, are only a few. And they do not adequately depict the complete picture of the efforts taken by Sambhaji in organising a strong army to defend the state. It cannot be said that he was totally blind to the political happenings and the Mughal aggression during this period, but it certainly makes us convincingly feel that all the activities of Sambhaji during this period lacked concentrated and conscientious effort. The period of three years (1685-1687), when the Marathas had some respite from the Mughal arms, could have been better utilized towards meeting the national emergency. But it seems that the Maratha king, though viewed it seriously, did not act on it promptly and diligently.

A few other major events of this period are that, on 5th February 1685, the Marahtas led by Jankirao and Niloji Pandit raided Dharangaon.[203] In May, Sambhaji's men made an effort to take the fort of Ahmadnagar by escalade, but the bid was foiled.[204] In October, Sambhaji ordered Kavi Kalash to rush to the help of the King of Bijapur. Kavi

Kalash reached Panhala and from there he sent a Marahta contingent towards Bijapur.

The Mughal activities in Maharashtra (1685-1687)

On 20th August 1685, the Mughals captured Rawla fort under Sambhaji. The story of the capture is quite thrilling. Fifteen hundred infantry men,mostly Mavale,in the Mughal service decided to launch a night attack as it was a dark and cloudy night and therefore they thought that they could really surprise the Marathas inside the fort. Muhammad Shariff, the Mughal faujdar of Chandor, equipped his men with ladders, bows etc. and reached the fort along with the Mavale men. As the midnight had passed, they put the ladders to the walls of the fort and about a hundred and fifty men scaled it. They killed the night guards and broke open the lock of the gate. By then rest of the Mughal soldiers had arrived and entered the fort. The Marathas inside the fort woke up due to the noise. But it was too late for them. The Maratha qil'edar Krishnaji Pawar, realizing the dangerous situation, hastened with his brother and kinsmen to fight the Mughal soldiers. But he was killed in the ensuing battle and the Mughal got the fort.[205]

On 26th August, Kakkar Khan was appointed to the army of Gazi-ud-din Khan. On 12th September, Sambhaji intended to send Hambir Rao towards Junnar.[206] On 11th October, I'tqad Khan, along with his army, was sent to Vangi in order to cause destruction in Sambhaji's territory and drive the Marathas away.[207]

During October, a Maratha force consisting of five thousand cavalry under the command of Nago Ballal arrived in the vicinity of Satara and Chandan Vandan, on their way to Bijapur. Mahadaji, the Mughal thanedar of Khatav had a small force with him and therefore he asked for reinforcement, but he was advised to keep off, if his force was small. [208]

In March-April 1686 the Mughals captured Miraj. On 19th October, 1686 I'tqad Khan, who was at Parner and Sangamner, was ordered to go to Mangalvedhe against Sambhaji. On 7th February 1687, Salher was captured by the Mughals. The Maratha qil'edar Yesaji, after surrendering the fort joined the Mughal service. Similar was the fate of another small fort of Sangola, near Pandharpur. This was surrendered by the Marathas (29th May) and the qil'edar Mankoji entered the Mughal service. Besides the activities mentioned here, we notice that till the beginning of 1688 there was hardly any other noticeable activity of the Mughals in the Maharashtra.

Adverse Impact of internal feuds on the Maratha state.

The period of these three and a half years is conspicuous by absence of any major military activity on the part of the Maratha Government. Sambhaji was busy for most of the time in settling internal dissensions and rivalries among his prominent nobles and ministers. The period makes bare the mutual hatred that divided the Maratha nobles on one side and Kavi Kalash, the trusted minister of Sambhaji on the other side. Kavi Kalash had almost taken upon himself to govern the Maratha country. And if we have to believe in the accounts of the authors of Ma'sir-i-Alamgiri and Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, then we know that Sambhaji whiled away most of his time in drinking wine and indulging in sensual pleasures. Thus he was unable to devote any time for the administration and important matters like defence of the home land.

Most of the generals and trusted followers who were in the service since Shivaji's time protested against the extreme interference by Kavi Kalash in the administration. On his advice, there were large scale arrests of such prominent men like Manaji More, Gangadhar Vasudev and Rahuji Somnath[209] (29th Oct. 1684). No reason was attributed for their arrests. Such arrests under Sambhaji was not a novelty. In the past, in September-October 1681, Sambhaji had

arrested Annaji Datto Sachiv, on the advice of Kavi Kalash and had beaten him severely. Later, he succumbed to the injuries and died. Again, Bal Prabhu, Somaji Datto and Hiroji Farzand were arrested near Parali and put to death for suspected conspiracy.[210] Shyamji Naik was arrested in Karnatak.

The arrests of such prominent leaders and generals created a lot of stir and uneasiness among the people. This certainly dealt a blow to the cause of unity and worsened the internal situation. As a direct result of such activities of Sambhaji, Rajaram, his younger brother, also might have planned to desert him and join the Mughals. On 30th August 1685 Ruhullah Khan informed Aurangzeb that Rajaram was desirous of walking into the Mughal camp. He was promised a mansab. But due to the vigilance of Sambhaji, Rajaram could not safely walk across. On 21st September 1685, Nahar Khan the thanedar of Sirval informed Ruhullah Khan that Sambhaji's men surprised them and took away Rajaram.[211] The Marathas suffered another setback in the death of Hambir Rao, the Commander-in-chief in December 1687.

In October-November, 1688, a bitter quarrel broke out between Kavi Kalash and Shirke. Kavi Kalash ran to the fort of Khelna for shelter and sought the help and interference of Sambhaji. Sambhaji in order to settle the matter and help Kavi Kalash arrived at Khelna from Raigadh. He punished the Shirkes.[212]

During November-December 1688, at the instigation of Kavi Kalash, Sambhaji arrested Pralhadpant,[213] Sarkarkun and many others. No reason for these arrests was given. This only confirmed the general belief about the high handedness of Kavi Kalash and helplessness of Sambhaji, to control the situation of law and order in the state. Internal dissensions had weakened the unity of the state.

From these events it appears that Sambhaji hardly devoted himself to the major task of military preparations against Aurangzeb.

Thus passed away the period of three and a half years when Aurangzeb and his armies were away from Maharashtra. Thus slipped away the rare opportunity that Sambhaji got, to keep himself in military preparedness. Thus was Maharashtra torn into personal feuds and factions, jealousies and rivalries, conspiracies, plots and counter plots. The opportunity was utilized by the trouble-makers on the borders of Maharashtra to serve their self-interests, and the cause of Maharashtra's unity and independence suffered. Sambhaji made no adequate efforts to meet the danger that threatened all the Deccani powers alike, his soldiers raided places in the Mughal territory as a matter of routine, but it did not influence the military situation.

The biographers of Sambhaji have defended him saying that during this period he was busy fighting wars with the Portuguese and the Sidis, who were a constant menace to his subjects. The defence sounds to be more lame, when one thinks over the destructive potential of each enemy with whom Sambhaji was confronted in those days, whether at the sea or on the land. It is evident from the happenings of the subsequent years that his real enemy was the Mughal Emperor. And a challenge coming from the mighty Mughals was to be met first. The rest of his enemies, even if they were put together could not have possibly defeated him. During all these years we see there was no preplanned action any where, nor any forethought was given to the danger looming large and the consequences to be followed from it. Nor was there much coherency in administration. Sambhaji's unprecedented high handedness in tackling the generals and ministers of repute brought to surface a lot of discontent and resentment from the people. The result of such activities is never unexpected. The then prevailing situation brought the end closer and probably at a faster pace. It would be

worthwhile comparing the then existing situation, with a similar situation at the time of Second World War, when Germany under Hitler was so powerful that, had Hitler directed his armies against England instead of Russia, England would have been a ruined nation. But Hitler. thought of some different war strategy, and instead of marching his armies into England, he ordered his generals to undertake the Russian campaign.This provided a great relief and respite to Enghland from German arms. The British people grasped the importance of the respite they got from the Germans and spared no pains in preparing themselves against a future attack from the Germans. And what were the results? The Garmans were finally defeated and the British and their allies emerged victorious. But for the proper utilization of this opportunity, the results would have been disastrous for the Britain.

Thus by comparison we see that there was great resemblance between the two situations, one in 1684 and the other in 1941. The Marathas and the British people in their respective age were passing through a most critical period in the history and life of the nation. The former did not prepare in time and the latter did. The results were obvious. In earlier case people suffered greatly, in latter case people rejoiced their victory and hard work.

Sambhaji captured and executed

By January 1688, Aurangzeb had completed his conquest of Bijapur and Golkonda and appointed his own governors for those provinces. Thus the two major Deccani states were merged into the Mughal Empire. The kingdom of the Marathas remained to be liquidated. After the conquest of the Deccani Sultanats, Aurangzeb looked to be a quite satisfied man. Hence forward he thought of subduing the Marathas. Quite confident of the fact that the secret help would not be coming any more from Sikandar Adil or Qutb Shah to Sambhaji, he confortably planned his campaign against the Marathas. During last two and half years, i.e.

since middle of 1685 the Mughal force left behind in Maharashtra was not at all strong in any sense. However, in January 1688, Ma'tabar Khan secured a large victory and captured Vishramgadh and the fort of Patta [214] from the Marathas.

In the same month, Aurangzeb called prince Aazam to his presence and ordered him to proceed against Sambhaji. Royal honours were bestowed on him. Forty thousand troops accompanied him. In February-March Aazam captured Belgaum and many other forts. [215]

In April 1688 Parsoji, a Mughal officer captured Madangadh [215a] (near Nasik).

In September 1688 the Mughals opened secret talks with the Maratha qil'edar of Maholi in Konkan. A mansab similar to that of the qil'edar of Salher and forty thousand rupees in cash were offered to him. But nothing seems to have come out of it, as the Marathas retained this fort. [215b]

In November-December, Aurangzeb arrived at Tulapur on the banks of the Bhima [216] from Bijapur. In December he deputed Shaikh Nizam to lay siege to the fort of Panhala, which was in the possession of Marathas. While at Tulapur he summoned a number of officers to his presence. [217] This was done with a view to launching a strong offensive against Sambhaji. Among the nobles and the generals were such eminent persons like Gazi-ud-din Khan Bahadur Firuz Jang, 7000 Zat, 7000 Sawar, with fourteen thousand troopers, Rustum Khan, 7000 Zat, 7000 Sawar, Khwaja Abdul Rahim Khan and Hidayat Ullah Khan both sons of Qulich Khan, and many other prominent Sardars. Gazi-ud-din Khan was sent to capture Rajgadh and other forts in its vicinity. The other nobles were given separate assignments of capturing the forts and territories under the Marathas.

From August 1688 Ma'tabar Khan was attempting to capture the fort of Trimbak in Nasik district. On 25th August Mubasir Khan went to Trimbak to inspect the

military stations there. From there he sent a message asking for reinforcements from other stations with a view to joining the siege.[218] Mubasir Khan hoped to take the fort in a few days provided Sambhaji did not send any reinforcement to the distressed qil'edar of Trimbak.

It appears that till the end of 1688 the Marathas guarded the fort well and did not allow the Mughals to take it by use of force. But in January of the following year (1689), Ma'tabar Khan acquired the fort by bribing the Maratha qil'edar.[219] And with the use of similar means, he got possession of Kalyan, Mahuli, Bhivandi, Durgadi and Malang-gadh.[220] The Mughal activities were being intensified in all parts of the Maratha kingdom.

In December 1688, Sayyid Abdullah Khan and his son captured Sarasgadh and Holgadh from the Marahas. The Maratha qil'edar gave a good account of himself, but he was defeated.[220a]

Shaikh Nizam who was ordered to lay siege to Panhala was in the vicinity of Kolhapur during January 1689. His spies got the news that Sambhaji on account of the quarrel between Kavi Kalash and the Shirkes, left Rahiri (Raigadh) for Khelna (Vishalgadh). After making a settlement with Shirke family he proceeded to Sangameshwar. And here that fateful event of his caputre by the Mughals took place. Sambhaji had least expected any such eventuality and therefore had remained unprepared.

Khafi Khan has given a very descriptive account of Sambhaji's activities during this period. He writes,"It was a coincidence that this wretch (Sambhaji) left Rahiri and reached Khelna. There he made adequate arrangements of supplies. His stars were in descendence. He was unaware of the march of the royal army. Manganga is on the borders of Sangameshwar. He had come there to bathe in the river. Sangameshwar is situated in inaccessible valleys. The minister of Sambhaji, Kavi Kalash had built a palace there.

Sambhaji, his son Shahu, Kavi Kalash, wives, children and about two to three thousand horse had reached there. He was unaware of his doom. They all bathed there. The approach to Sangameshwar from the ghats is very difficult. There are ups and downs on the road and also thick growth of thorny bushes. Taking all this into consideration Sambhaji thought himself quite safe and stayed there."

"Sambhaji's father was a hard working and honest person. But Sambhaji's behaviour was just contrary to it. He was fond of drinking wine and loved to stay in the company of women, whose cheeks were as delicate as flowers and whose foreheads resembled that of the moon. He was indulging in sensual pleasures. Muqarrab Khan's spies were moving in that territory. They received the intelligence of Sambhaji's activity and Muquarrab Khan decided to capture him. Sangameshwar was about forty five kos away from Kolhapur. He took two thousand brave cavalrymen and one thousand select soldiers with him and started (for Sangameshwar) ... That brave soldier had started with the intention of Jihad ... He traversed speedily. Whenever the road was difficult, he used to get down from the horse and walk. From the thick of jungles they came out like lightening. Sambhaji's fate was sealed. His death approached close. He and his men reached near Sambhaji."

"It is said that the spies of Sambhaji carried the intelligence of the approaching Mughal army. But Sambhaji was intoxicated with wine of folly and pride. He could not even entertain a suspicion, that Mughals would come there. He was very proud of himself. In addition to this he was intoxicated with wine which is the cause of all destruction. He ordered the tongues of the spies to be cut. He did not prepare for his defence or dug the trenches. Muquarrab Khan fell upon him. Most of Sambhaji's men deserted him. With rest of the people he got ready to fight. His intelligent minister Kavi Kalash took Sambhaji with him. There were renowned Maratha sardars. In the beginning of the fight

Kavi Kalash received injuries to his hand, and slipped off from the horse. Sambhaji who was watching this stayed behind. Five Marathas were killed and the rest fled. Kavi Kalash was captured. Sambhaji ran to a temple and hid himself there. The Mughals searched for him and located Sambhaji. He tried in vain. At last a few of his men (serving as his bodyguard) were killed. Then, Sambhaji, his wives, Shahu and twenty six other persons were captured. Ram Raja was not there. The Mughals tied their hands and they were dragged with the hair to Muqarrab Khan's elephant. In the meantime, Sambhaji had shaved clean and had changed the clothes. But he was identified because of his pearl necklace."

"Then Muqarrab Khan carried him on his horse and thus they were brought to the base camp." [221]

Bhimsen in Dilkusha gives more or less the same account except in some places he differs in respect of some minor details. Ma'sir-i-Alamgiri also gives the same story. But according to its author Saqi Must'ad Khan, along with Sambhaji there were about four to five thousand Deccani spearsmen to support him. According to another version Sambhaji along with some men from Khatola fort was going to another fort, when Muqarrab Khan captured and imprisoned him. [222]

The Marathi sources are silent about the way in which Sambhaji was captured. Jedhe Shakavali only mentions that on 7th of Magh(Bd) 1610 Saka, Sambhaji and Kavi Kalash were captured alive and taken prisoners by Shaikh Nizam at Sangameshwar. [223] In the absence of any other source material we have to believe the accounts given by Persian historians, though they appear to be a little partial and exaggerated.

The news of Sambhaji's capture reached Aurangzeb at Akluj. After receiving the happy tidings the place was renamed as Asad Nagar. On 15th February, Sambhaji was

chained and brought to the royal court at Bahadurgadh (Pedgaon).

In the imperial camp, the king of Marathas was disgraced and humiliated. A wooden cap was put on his head. All the prisoners were dressed like buffoons. According to the author of Masir-i-Alamgiri it was essential to do so as "the Muslim might be heartened and the infidels disheartened by seeing it." The Muslims in particular in the royal camp celebrated the occasion, as if it was Shab-i-barat or Id. All the prisoners were taken round the town and then brought to the court.

Khafi Khan relates an interesting incident when Sambhaji and Kavi Kalash were brought to the court and presented before the Emperor Aurangzeb, who was so overwhelmed after the sight of the prisoners, stepped down from the throne, in order to offer his prayers to Allah. Seeing this act of Aurangzeb, Kavi Kalash promptly composed a verse in Hindi, meaning "Oh Rajah (Sambhaji) after seeing you here the Emperor has forgotten his pomp, glory and pride, and has got down from the throne, in order to bow before you in reverence."

This gesture was certainly not appreciated by the courtiers. Soon the prisoners were sent back, with severe consequences to follow. The royal prisoners were not given any trial. According to Masir-i-Alamgiri the verdict on Sambhaji was given in these words, viz. "In consideration of the harshness and insult he (Sambhaji) practised by slaying and imprisoning Muslims, plundering the cities of Islam, the destruction of the wicked infidel preponderated over the reasons for keeping him alive and the decision of the Masters of the Holy Law and faith ... and State were in favour of despatching this hellish robber." [224]

There was no appeal on the judgement, though some courtiers did advise Aurangzeb to spare the life of Sambhaji.

The sentence was not executed immediately. On 3rd

March Aurangzeb arrived at Koregaon. For next eight days all the prisoners were tortured alike. The treatment muted to them was most inhuman and equally heart-rending. The tongues of the prisoners were cut off and the eyes blinded. Thus even the death was being cruel to them in approaching slow. On the 11th March, at Vadhu (near Koregaon) they were finally put to a cruel and painful death.

The vengeance was not over, the flesh of royal prisoners was thrown before the dogs. [225] Their heads were separated from their bodies and were taken in procession in all the parts of the Deccan. [226] People were told that a tyrant, whose profession was to cause trouble to the public would always be rewarded with this punishment.

Thus fell down the king of the Marathas, unhonoured and unsung.

The captor of Sambhaji, Shaikh Nizam was highly rewarded for his splendid service with the title of Khan-i-Zaman Fath Jang, a cash reward of twenty-five thousand rupees, a special robe and a mansab of seven hazari. As a token of his gratitude on the fulfillment of his dream, Aurangzeb sent ten thousand rupees to Khwaja Gesu Daraz at Gulbarga for distributing it as alms. Trumpets of victory were blown for three days in the royal army.

In this way the first phase of the Mughal-Maratha struggle came to a close, a phase which brought victory to the Mughals and a seeming defeat to the Marathas. But all was not over; the Marathas had only lost a battle and not the war. The mistaken ideas and impressions of Aurangzeb were soon to be dispelled by the heroes of the Marahta army and leaderless people in the following decade or two.

The Aftermath

With the execution of Sambhaji, Aurangzeb's dream was partially fulfilled. Aurangzeb felt that after the death of Sambhaji, the Marathas would be left without a king and without a leader. What was expected to come out of such a

situation was nothing but chaos and disorder. In other words, he thought, the kingdom of the Marathas was almost liquidated. In June 1689, he issued orders for return journey to Shahjahanabad. [227]

Within a few months after Sambhaji's death, Raigadh, the stronghold and the capital of the Marathas was captured by Zulfiqar Khan. By the end of the year 1689, Aurangzeb appeared to be the unrivalled master of Northern India and the Deccan alike. The king of Bijapur, the king of Golkonda and the king of the Marathas were all vanquished. Their respective kingdoms were all extinguished and their territory brought under the Mughal banner. But then all was not well with the Mughal Emperor and his imperial dominion. Prof. Jadu Nath Sarkar has aptly described it, 'All seemed to have been gained by Aurangzib now but in reality all was lost. It was beginning of his end the saddest and most hopeless chapter of his life now opened. The Mughal Empire had become too large to be ruled by one man or from one centre. His enemies rose from all sides, he could defeat but not crush them forever. The administration grew slack and corrupt. The endless war in the Deccan exhausted his treasury. The Deccan ulcer ruined him'. [228]

The king of the Marathas was captured and executed. The reign of terror had stretched its arms in the Maratha country. An united and firm opposition to the victorious Mughal arms had become a distant possibility. The Maratha state was being pressed in the firm grip of the Mughal domination.

At this hour when everything appeared to be going smooth and well, Aurangzeb noticed something dreadful in the Maratha land. Though their king was executed and the state was without a leader, still people mustered courage to show resistance to the Mughal armies in every nook and corner of the Maratha land.

The deterent punishment given to Sambhaji hardly roused

any fear among the people in the Maratha land. Aurangzeb was disappointed. A few months later, he saw that the people had become more determined and courageous than ever. By punishing Sambhaji, he wanted to terrorise the people and thus force upon them the Mughal domination. But it was an irony of fate, that more he tried to suppress the people, more vehemeantly they defied the Mughals. The history of subsequent years is replete with several incidents illustrating this spirit of defiance throwing challenge to the Mughal power. The period of nine years under Sambhaji, shows a partial half-hearted opposition. Some events of this period clearly indicated that there was will to fight among the people.

The ground for the future war for independence was slowly but certainly prepared. The willingness of the people to preserve the spirit of independence was evident. The great respect for the religion and the ideals of happy life which Shivaji had imbibed on their minds were still fresh and alive. Though the leadership of Sambhaji did not give enough scope to his generals to march against the Mughal armies, the spirit of courage and valour was not dead among the people.

The subsequent events of this period (i.e. 1689-1707) bear witness to these facts. Those were the days when the seed of unity was sown. It grew stronger in later years, though some people deserted the Maratha side and betrayed the cause of Swaraj, yet the war was carried on. Nothing ever discouraged the people from resisting the aggression or desisted from standing in unity against the Mughal sword. Instead of fear it brought more courage and greater determination among the people. Therefore, they appear to be taking up arms unitedly against the most powerful enemy even at the perial of their lives and belongings. To them, there was no other alternative, other than victory or death. Consequently, they established the fact that even in the absence of proper leadership, they were still capable of

guarding the most valued principles that they had learnt from Shivaji, viz. the preservance of 'Liberty'.

Uppermost inthe minds of the Marathas was the love for their country's independence. To protect their freedom and liberty they were prepared to sacrifice everything. The situation was something like when Sam Adams spoke to people at the time of the American War of Independence. "I would advise persisting in our struggle for Liberty though it were revealed from Heaven that 999 men were to perish, and only one of a thousand to survive and retain his liberty. One such freeman must possess more virtue and enjoy more happiness, than a thousand slaves." Though we may not come across any written statements like this, yet, a historian, gathering his knowledge from the facts and events that took place in the subsequent years, has to irresistably draw the same conclusion. Here is the admission given by Khafi Khan, while describing the condition of Aurangzeb after the death of Sambhaji, "The God willed that the troubles started by the infidels were not to be uprooted from the Deccan. And rest of the precious life of the Emperor was to be consumed in arranging campaigns and taking forts."[229]

The period of nine years (1680-89) was a remarkable period both, for Mughals as well as the Marahtas. It was a period of successive victories and high hopes for the Mughals. It was a period of continuous withdrawals, defeats and despair for the Marathas. Under the leadership of Aurangzeb himself, the Mughal army, led by generals of repute and experience ran through the Deccan. The efficient cavalry and well equipped artillery though unfamiliar to the terrian of Maharashtra penetrated deep into the different regions. With their superior numbers and vast supplies they were able to surmount all types of difficulties and were able to silence the Maratha opposition for a while.

The condition of the Maratha army was different. Sambhaji was more occupied with his wars at the sea, with the Dutch, the Portuguese and the Sidis. And when freed

from it, there were feuds and factions within the Maratha nobility, the internal rivalries of his minister Kavi Kalash with the other sardars of repute kept his attention engaged. During this period Sambhaji did not offer any organised resistance to the invading Mughal armies.

What took place was only in the nature of skirmishes and stray raids. But none the less, though the king himself did not make any deliberate effort to strengthen the defence or to drive away the enemy or to stop the inroads of Mughal army's march in the Maratha land, the people in general acted upon it. The generals of Sambhaji in particular became aware of the danger of the Mughal invasion. Therefore they became active in repulsing the Mughal forces, in various parts of Maharashtra.

Notes

1. Journal of the Bombay Branch of Royal Asiatic Society, Vol.XXII. 'Shivaji's Swarajya', by Purushottam Vikram Mawji, pp.30-42, 'Jabita Swaraj' a original bilingual (Persian and Marathi) document dated 24th Shawwal, Suhur Sanah, Saman ashar maya alaf, corresponding to 19th September 1717. The text of the document aims at defining the territory under Swaraj (in Marathi) and Raj Kadeem in Persian, which probably means the territory under the jurisdiction of Shivaji or the territory under the possession of the Marathas at the time of the Mughal occupation of Shivaji's Raj.

   There is another document on the same subject published in Rajwade Vol.VIII pp.104-08, dated 15th March 1719, i.e. an year and half later than 'Jabita Swaraj' referred to above. While defining the territories under Prant Konkan, it makes a mention of Kole and Mahad as two additional subas.
2. HS, pp.214-15
3. SKPS, p.101
4. HS, pp.215
5. HS, pp.215-16
6. SKPS, Vol.III, p.144
7. Akhbarat Julus 23, Jamadi II, 20 & SKPS, p.104
8. Akh. J. 23, Rajab 14
9. HS, p.216

10. Akh. J.23, Shaban 17
11. Akh. J.23 Jihijja, 8
12. SCP, p.31
    Khafi Khan in ML gives the date as 20th Muhrram 1091 (H) (1681 Jan.1) and J. Sarkar quoting the same source gives the date as 30th January 1681. It is difficult to corroborate the same with any third source. Surprisingly, Masir-i-Alamgiri and Dilkusha of Bhimsen are silent about this event. As most of the dates and events given in Jedhe Shakavali have been accepted as authentic, I consider the date given in JS of this particular event also as authentic and presume that Burhanpur was plundered by the Marathas on this date.
13. MM, p.77
14. According to Khafi Khan, Akbar was received at Sambhaji's palace three miles away from the fort of Rajgadh, and that too on 1st June. This view does not appear to be correct.
15. Akh. J.26 Ziqadah 19
16. (From Surat 31 Jan.1682 D.R.Vol.37), the Dutch view as quoted by Sarkar in HA, Vol.IV, p.252
17. HS, pp.219-20
18. BISMQ Vol.II No.1, p.17
19. HS, p.220
20. SCP, p.31
21. HS, pp.211-12
22. HS, p.212
23. HA, Vol.IV, p.283
24. SKPS, p.110
25. MA, p.222. But according to Prof. Sarkar (HA. Vol.V p.142) Ranmast Khan marched into Konkan during September-October, through Mahje pass and occupied Kalyan.
26. Akh. J.26, Ramzan, 21.
27. Akh. J.26, Ziqadah, 3
28. Akh. J.26, Shawwal, 6
29. Vakil Report (VR) dt.17 Ziqadah, Ziqadah, 1093 A.H.
30. Akh. J.26, Ziqadah, 23.
31. Akh. J.26, Ziqadah, 24.
32. Akh. J.26, Muharam 3, SCP, p.32
33. Akh. J.26, Muharam 13.
34. Akh. J.26, Muharam 19.
35. The entire incident has been reconstructed with the help of. Akhbarat dated 28th Rabi I, 14th, 16th and 21st Rabi II, Julus 26 and Vakil Report dt.21st Rabi.II. (17th March, 2nd,

4th and 9th April 1683) and SCP, p.32. SCP mentions the place of battle as Titoliya or present Titwala. But Persian records are silent about it. The Marathi records mention only Rupaji Bhosale's name. From Persian records it appears that Hambir Rao and Manaji More in addition to Rupaji Bhosale were also present. The major discrepancy appears about the date of the battle. Marathi records do not mention the exact date, but give the month as Saka 1605, Chaitra (March-April 1683). Obviously, there seems to be some error about it. The News Letters mention specifically that the battle took place on 10th Rabi I, Julus 26 (27th Feb.1683). Therefore, one has to accept 27th Feb. 1683 as the date of the battle. From the News letters we come to know that Aurangzeb was so pleased with Padam Singh's bravery and loyalty that as a gesture of royal favour he permitted his wives to perform Sati without any hindrance.

36. Akh. J.26, Rabi I, 16.
37. Akh. J.26, Rabi I, 24
38. Akh. J.26, Rabi II, 12
39. Akh. J.26, Rabi II, 21
40. Vakil Report dt. 8th Jamadi II, 1094 A.H.
41. KK, p.291
42. KK, p.280
43. SCP, p.32
44. Ibid
45. HA, Vol.IV, p.258
46. SCS, Vol.II, No.271, p.267
47. Akh. J.26 Ramzan, 10
48. Akh. J.26 Shawwal, 13 and VR dated 18th Shaban 1092 A.H., mentions that Netaji Palkar, with eight thousand troopers, also arrived in Baglana. The report further adds that Prince Muhammad Akbar and Sambhaji were also expected to be in that region.
49. Akh. J.26, Ziqadah 10.
50. M.A. p.215
51. Akh. J.26 Jihijja 8. Mehandali, a village about five miles from Kalyan-Bhivandi.
52. Akh. J.26, Muharram, 12.
53. Akh. J.26, Rabi I, 11.
54. Akh. J.26, Rabi I, 11.
55. M.A. p.235
56. Ibid p.239. Karanpura, to me it appears to be either a suburb

of Ahmadnagar or a very nearby place.

57. SCP, p.32. The fort of Ramsej is situated at a distance of seven miles from Nasik.

58. M.A. p.219
59. KK, p.282
60. According to Factory records surat 108, dated 30th July 1683, Hambir Rao was repulsed with a loss of 2000 men. This date appears to be incorrect as the siege was abandoned by the Mughals in September-October 1682. SCP, p.32

61. SCP, p.32
62. Akh. J.26, Ramzan 4
63. Akh. J.26, Ramzan, 28.
64. Akh. J.26, Zihijja, 17.
65. KK, p.284. But the success of the Marathas was short lived. The qil'edar of Ramsej was transferred by Sambhaji and the new incumbent was bribed by the Mughals and the fort ultimately came in the possession of the Mughals.

66. Akh. J.26, Ramzan, 10.
67. Akh. J.26, Ramzan,13 and Shawwal 17.
68. Akh. J.26, Shawwal 7.
69. Akh. J.26, Shawwal 11.
70. Akh. J.26, Shawwal 22.

71. Akh. J.26, Shawwal 24.
72. Khandan - Khanda in Khandesh.
73. Akh. J.26, Shawwal 26.
74. Akh. J.26, Zihijja, 8.
75. Akh. J.26, Zihijja 15.
76. Akh. J.26, Muharram 6.
77. Akh. J.26, Rabi I, 14 &24.
    One has to accept the claim of the Mughals with caution as most of their soldiers were killed in the battle. So it is doubtful if the victory was real.

78. Akh. J.26, Ramzan 23.
79. Akh. J.26, Shawwal 10.
80. Akh. J.26, Shawwal 13.
81. Akh. J.26, Ziqadáh 13.
    On 7th November 1682 Aurangzeb received a petition from Qulich Khan begging favour for the battle against Hambirrao. But he did not accept the report as true and expressed his

doubt saying that if Qulich Khan was victorious then why so many Mughal soldiers were killed and why did he return alone to prince Aazam. From this it is evident that not the Mughals but the Marathas were victorious.

82. Akh. J.26, Ziqadah 11.
83. Akh. J.26, Ziqadah 21.
84. Akh. J.26, Ziqadah 26. Aurangzeb felt that Mukarram Khan was negligent about his duties therefore his mansab was ordered to be reduced.
85. Akh. J.26, Zihijja 28.
86. Akh. J.26, Muharram 4.
87. Akh. J.26, Safar 15.
88. Akh. J.26, Rabi II, 9. The report does not appear to be trustworthy. Firstly because all the men from the Mughal side were either killed or wounded. Secondly, a Vakil Report dated 9th Rabi II, Julus 26 (5th March 1685) clearly mentions that Prince Aazam recovered this fort sometime in Feb. 85 and the qil'edar gave him peshkash worth nine lacs hons.
89. V.R.14, Jamadi I, 1096 A.H.
90. Story of Bijapur Kings by Modak, Vol. II, p.265 Almaj appears to be Almele on the border of Sholapur and Bijapur territory.
91. Akh. J.27, Muharram 26.
92. Akh. J.27, Muharram 30.
93. Akh. J.27, Safar 1.
94. Akh. J.26, Jamadi I, 4.
95. Akh. J.26, Rajab 17.
96. MA, p.211
97. Ibid, p.222
98. Akh. J.26, Ziqadah, 15.
99. Akh. J.26, Muharram 12.
100. Akh. J.26, Rabi I, 6
101. Akh. J.26, Rabi I, 10.
102. Akh. J.26, Rabi I, 12.
103. Akh. J.26, Rabi II, 7.
104. Akh. J.27, Safar 1.
105. Akh. J.27, Safar 5.
106. Akh. J.26, Zihijja 28.
107. Akh. J.26, Muharram 4
108. SCP, p.32
109. Akh. J.26, Muharram 27.
110. MA, p.240
111. Akh. J.27, Muharram 25, SCP, pp.32-33. It gives the date of burning Nizampur as 27 Dec.1683.

112. Akh. J.27, Muharram 29.
113. Akh. J.26, Ziqadah 23.
114. Akh. J.26, Zihijjah 4.
115. Akh. J.26, Muharram 22.
116. Akh. J.26, Rabi I, 26.
117. Akh. J.26, Rabi I, 1
118. Akh. J.26, Rabi I, 14.
119. Akh. J.26, Rabi I, 23.
120. Akh. J.26, Rabi I, 25.
121. Akh. J.26, Rabi I, 30. The report says that all the Mughal soldiers were killed or wounded in the action, then how could they claim victory? Therefore we have to accept such statements with caution. Makangaon is near Washim in Khandesh. The battle took place near Makan or Malkhed? Nek Rai-we do not get any details about this Maratha noble from Marathi or local sources.
121a. Akh. J.26, Rabi II, 2 & 5.
122. V.R. dated 18 Rajab 1094 A.H. sent by Kamal Nayan.
123. Basatin-ul-Salatin, p.446
124. MA, pp. 248-49
125. SCP, p.33
126. Akh. J.28, Safar 26.
127. Akh. J.28 Safar 29, MA, p.252 and Raigadchi Jivan Kahani by S.V. Avlaskar. Aurangzeb awarded the title of Firuz Jang Bahadur to Gazi-ud-din Khan, in appreciation of his bravery in the face of the enemy.
128. Akh. J.28, Ziqadah 4.
129. Akh. J.28, Ziqadah 9.
130. Akh. J.28, Ziqadah 28.
131. Akh. J.28, Zihijja 22.
132. MA, p. 249
133. Akh. J.28, Zihijja 5.
134. Akh. J.28, Zihijja 14 and 18.
SCP, p.33. The date of capture given in Marathi and Persian sources coincides. As Mavale had helped the Mughals and as they were the first to enter into the fort, Aurangzeb rewarded them with a bracelet of gold and silver to each one of them. (Akh. J.28, Muharram 24).
135. Akh. J.28, Zihijja 22 and 23.
136. Akh. J.28, Safar 5.
137. Akh. J.28, Muharram 25.
138. Akh. J.28, Safar 18.
139. Akh. J.28, Jamadi II, 4.

140. Akh. J.28, Muharram 4.
141. Akh. J.28, Muharram 6.
142. Akh. J.28, Safar 9.
143. Akh. J.28, Safar 10
144. Akh. J. 28, Muharram 25.
145. Akh. J.28, Safar 2.
146. Akh. J.28, Muharram 21.
147. Akh. J.28, Safar 8.
148. Akh. J.28, Safar 10.
149. Akh. J.28, Safar 11.
150. Akh. J.28, Safar 16 & 17.
151. Akh. J.28, Safar 17.
152. Akh. J.28, Safar 17 & 18.
153. Akh. J.28, Safar 18.
154. Akh. J.28, Safar 25.
155. Akh. J.28, Rabi I, 3.
156. Akh. J.28, Rabi I, 15.
157. Akh. J.28, Safar 24.
158. Akh. J.28, Safar 17.
159. Akh. J.28, Safar 19.
160. Akh. J.28, Safar 21.
161. Akh. J.28, Rabi I, 4.
162. Akh. J.28, Rabi I, 6.
163. Akh. J.28, Rabi I, 4.
164. Akh. J.28, Rabi I,7.
165. Ibid.
166. Akh. J.28, Rabi I, 9.
167. Akh. J.28,Rabi I, 10.
168. Akh. J.28, Rabi I, 13.
169. Akh. J.28, Rabi I, 10.
170. Akh. J.28, Rabi II, 2 & 3.
171. Akh. J.28, Rabi II, 5.
172. Akh. J.28, Rabi II, 9.
173. Akh. J.28, Rabi II, 13.
174. Ibid.
175. Akh. J.28, Rabi II, 19. Muhammad son of Khizar, Safiullah, Sohrab and Sharif are a few names who were killed in the battle.
176. Akh. J.28, Rabi II, 12.
177. Akh. J.28, Rajab 1. There is no other source to contradict this. But probably Pratapgadh might not have been burnt instead a nearby village might have been burnt. This was the usual way of reporting by the Mughal officers to Aurangzeb. A similar example we come across about Raigadh, whereas Panchorawadi

was burnt and not the fort. But it was reported that the fort was burnt. Mujahid was son of Gazi-ud-din Khan.

178. Akh. J.28, Rajab 2.
179. Akh. J.28, Rajab 11.
180. Akh. J.28, Safar 12 & Muharram 5.
181. BUS, p. 520
182. Dutch Records, Voi.37, as quoted by Prof. J.N.Sarkar in HA, Vol. IV, p.301.
183. History of the Swantwadi State, Appendix 1, Nos. 13, 14, and 15, pp. 14-16.
184. HA, Vol. IV, p. 307.
185. Ibid, p.308 and 311.
186. MA, p.256.
187. Surat Factory Records.
188. BUS, p. 450
189. Ibid, p.451
190. Ibid, p.452
191. KK, p.294
192. SCS, Vol. II, No. 394, pp. 395-97.
193. HA, Vol. IV, p.344
194. KK, pp.298-306
195. KK, p.307, MA, p.267
196. HA, Vol. IV, p.351
197. SCP, p. 34
198. MA, p. 295
199. Ibid.
200. HA, Vol. IV, p.384.
201. Rajwade, Voi.XV, No.280, p.287.
202. SKPS, No. 298, p.66
202a. SCS, Vol. II, No. 271, p.267.
202b. SKPS, No.126, p.39
202c. Rajwade, Vol. XV, No.342, pp.371-72
202d. Rajwade, Vol. XV, No.281, p.288.
202e. SCS, Vol. II, No.222, p.221.
202f. SCS, Vol. XII, No.2, p.5.
203. Factory Records, Surat 12 February 1685.
204. MM, p.87
205. Akh. J.29, Shawwal 10
206. Akh. J.29, Shawwal 23.
207. Akh. J.29, Shawwal 22.
208. Akh. J.29, Ziqadah 27.
209. SCP, p.33
210. Ibid. p.31.

211. Akh. J.29, Shawwal 9 & Ziqadah 2. Unfortunately there is no other source available either to corraborate or contradict this information. Judging by the performance of Rajaram as a king, this act appears to be incredible.
212. SCP, p.34.
213. SKPS, p.119.
214. HA, Vol. V, p.146.
215. SCP, p.34,
215a. Akh. J.31, Jamadi II,20.
216. Ibid.
217. SDA, pp.197-99, No.4955.
218. SDA, pp.184-86, No.905.
219. HA, Vol. V, p.147. Prof.Sarkar gives details about the exact amount of bribe paid to the qil'edar but how poorly he was reimbursed by Aurangzeb.
220. Sambhaji by G.S.Sardesai, p.90. Sardesai does not disclose the source of his information. And we do not come across this information elsewhere.
220a. Akh. J.32, Zihijjah 13.
220b. Akh. J.32, Safar 21.
221. KK, pp.384-86.
222. VR, 24 Rabi II, 1100 A.H. Khatola does not appear to be a fort, but a very small place near Sangameshwar. If we have to believe this report, then, it is for the first time, we come across exact place where Sambhaji was arrested by Shaikh Nizam.
223. SCP, p.34.
224. MA, p.324.
225. Storia Do Mogor, Vol.II, pp.311-12.
226. KK, p.389.
227. VR, 5th Ramzan, Julus 32. Orders were also issued to repair the palaces and the gardens in Shahjahanabad. But some how or the other, it seems this did not materialise.
228. Studies in Mughal India, pp.50-51.
229. KK, p.389.

2. Rajaram Confronted by the Mughal arms (1689-1700)

A country in Chaos

Sambhaji was executed. For a period of one week before his death he suffered utmost torture and punishment. Humiliation, insult and injury, were mounting every moment that he passed in the Mughal camp. Once a king and a leader of a great race, he was helpless in the Mughal prison. No doubt he was helpless, but he never begged for mercy. It is very difficult to recapitulate the thoughts which were in his mind, when he was subjected to a most inhuman torture. No records are available to show his reaction to his enemy. But the way he withstood the onslaught one feels that his mind was more occupied by his country than anything else, and he might have perhaps said to himself "I shall never surrender or beg for mercy, I am determined to sustain myself as long as possible and die like a soldier who never forgets what is due to his own honour and that of his country .... Death."

He faced a martyr's death, for the love of his country and for the liberty of his cumpatriots.

In punishing Sambhaji in a most cruel way, Aurangzeb had manifold intentions. The first and foremost was to create 'reign of terror' in Maharashtra and establish his supremacy over the land. This he expected would effectively wreck the morale of the people, break their unity and perhaps they could also be coerced to join the Mughal service. And to a certain extent, Aurangzeb was successful in creating such chaotic conditions in the country. Some opportunist Desais and Deshmukhs did desert the Maratha

cause. With bended knees and folded hands, these Maratha nobles went to Aurangzeb and accepted the 'royal mansab'. According to his belief, there was neither intelligence nor virtue among these people sufficient to enable them to govern themselves. They could be and had to be subdued and humbled by physical force alone. In the death of Sambhaji, he felt that he had vanquished the stubborn Marathas and he hoped that for sometime atleast he could repose as a victor. How sadly he was mistaken in his belief, the political events followed by the death of Sambhaji proved it beyond doubt.

The conditions in Maharashtra after the death of Sambhaji were really explosive. The marks left behind by his death, were not to be obliterated so soon. The injuries were deep. The feelings of the people were like a volcano, likely to errupt any time. There appeared to be no longer a government. Danger pressed. Disaster thickened. The atmosphere was surcharged with vengence. The people were to fight not only for the Swaraj but also to avenge the cruel death of their king. Patriotism overshadowed all other feelings and emotions of the people. Their sentiments were roused. And it is said that, "It is the sentiment which is the political salvation of free states", if ever it was to be true, the events of this period, give abundant evidence of the same.

The capture and execution of Sambhaji did not discourage the Maratha leaders in any way. Neither of the sources Persian or Marathi, make any mention that the Marathas were overawed or subdued, after this debacle. What little we gather from the events is exactly the opposite viz. that the execution of the Maratha king kindled the fire of the Maratha opposition, and set forth a real revolution. Maharashtra became active like a live volcano. After almost nine years of war, the people well realized that the only way they could have peace was to drive away their enemy with all their might. It was beyond doubt clear to them, that the task required nothing short of herculian strength. And the origin and source of that strength lay in the masses. The only way for them was to stand united.

For the last nine years (1680-89) what was the state of Maharashtra? The great mass of the people were exhausted with suffering and longed for repose. The Mughal pestilence had almost destroyed them. The land was full of powerful enemy agents. The execution of Sambhaji created a big vaccum in the leadership of Maharashtra. There was no single person of sufficient prominence to carry with the nation. Rajaram, the king apparent was only twenty years of age. Sambhaji's son, Shahu, was considered not more than a child. The other prominent persons from the royal retinue and ministerial post, were hardly thought of as being capable of shouldering the burden. The storm of the capture and execution of Sambhaji hurled its own problems on the bewildered people of Maharashtra. But soon they found inspiration in the person of Rajaram, their new king.

Rajaram enthroned : -

At the time of Sambhaji's arrest Rajaram was in the prison at Raigadh. He was released from the prison by Changoji Katkar, the qil'edar of Raigadh and Yesaji Kank. This happened on 9th February 1689.[1] The other Sarkarkuns who were under arrest, including Manaji More were all released. They were reappointed to their original posts. Rajaram to whom both fame and fortune were unknown was enthroned at Raigadh on 12th February 1689.[2] Almost in a matter of three days since the arrest of Sambhaji, the Marathas had found their new leader. He was resolved to subdue anarchy at home and aggression from abroad. The country was already disgraced and the humiliation had struck him deep.

Within a period of month and a half of Rajaram's taking over the Government, Aurangzeb sent Zulfiqar Khan on 25th March 1689 to capture Raigadh.[3] He promptly laid siege to the fort. The siege was being pressed hard. From the existing conditions it appeared that they would not be able to defend the fort for a long. Inside were stranded, the widow of Sambhaji, Yesubai, her son Shahu, Rajaram and many

other ministers. The safety of Rajaram and Yesubai were matters of paramount importance. It appears from some of the chronicles that, Yesubai, realizing the plight of all the persons, advised that in the fitness of the events it was Rajaram's safety which was more important. He was asked to abandon the fort to a place of greater safety. Hopes and fears of the people were centred on him. Thus bravely she uttered to the ministers "fear not". Rallied by these daring words the ministers recovered their lost courage. Yesubai and the other ministers who had assembled in the fort had their minds occupied with the thought of Maharashtra and the millions of Marathas, whose destiny was hanging on fire.

All of them unanimously agreed to a certain plan of action. All the ministers, qil'edars and leaders who had gathered at Raigadh regarded Rajaram as their master and thus lent their unequivocal support to him. And in turn, Rajaram contemplated them not as equals and confiding friends but as efficient and valuable instruments for the accomplishment of the cause of Swaraj.

Council of Ministers.

Rajaram's problem was to sustain the Maratha kingdom against heavy Mughal onslaught. The magnitude of the problem appeared to be greater when the Marathas were to hold it with the bare skeleton of an almost weaponless army, supported by little more than 'sticks and stones' of the inhabitants. Defence was vital and was to be pursued with all speed and all ingenuity, every artifice and efficiency.

To tide over these problems, he had to select and appoint capable persons as his ministers to execute the job. With consumate tact he selected the ablest men to occupy the most important departments and govern provinces. And these able persons in their turn assured that enormous care would be bestowed on the administration of the new government for four million people. Those who were selected by him were Ramchandrapant, Shankarajipant as Sachiv and

Pralhad Niraji, as administrator and Khandoji Naik Pansambal as Chief of the army.

Ramchandrapant and Shankarajipant, the two loyal servants of the kingdom, where brilliant in wit and speech, relentless and stubborn, gauged with skill and insight the strength and subtelities of their opponents mind. Their point of interest was survival of Maharashtra against such an upheaval.

Khandoji Naik Pansambal was a brave soldier and a great warrior. In the past he had fought many battles and proved to be the master of war strategy. In addition to him there were other brave soldiers, like Santaji Ghorpade and his two brothers, Dhanaji Jadhav, Nemaji Shinde and Vithoji Chavan.

Santaji was to Rajaram a body of ten thousand horsemen, ever ready for a resistless charge. Dhanaji was a phalanax of infantry and cavalry, bristling with swords and spears, which neither artillery nor cavalry could batter down or break. Nemaji was an armed column of invincible troops, black, dense, massy, impetuous, resistless moving with gigantic tread wherever the finger of the Chhatrapati pointed. These were but the few names of Rajaram's army leaders. They were like limbs obedient to the mighty soul which swayed them.

The foremost problem before the Council of Ministers was that the Mughal armies were chasing Rajaram and he was to be saved from the Mughal captivity. There was no real place of safety for him in his own country. The possibility of fighting through the forts was not to last long. Indeed the Marathas did possess some important forts, but how long would they have been able to sustain against the might of Aurangzeb? Therefore, it was thought that a place away from Maharashtra would appropriately serve this purpose. Keeping this in view, a new plan and a new strategy was to be devised. And thus the idea of opening a "Second Front" at

Jinji came into existence. The fort of Jinji was considered, in view of military strategy a less accessible fort to the enemy. And the chances of stronger and durable defence, with less manpower were considered to be very bright. Secondly by making Jinji as Rajaram's abode, the Marathas expected, the Mughal armies to follow him there. Thus they would attain their objective of diverting the Mughal armed forces faraway from the land of Maharashtra. The Mughal troops were the cause of great destruction both, to men and crops. This would offer the Marathas a better opportunity, to meet this divided force more effectively. In addition to this in the opinion of Prof. J.N.Sarkar "His (Rajaram's) aim was to divert the Mughal army from his kingdom of Puna and join with several Nayaks and raise a considerable army to retake Golkonda and Bijapur kingdoms." [4]

Though the Marathas were having a good army, yet, in the foreseeable future, they could have scarcely hoped to be in a position to throw in as many divisions compared with their enemy. Therefore, the war strategy was designed to keep the enemy constantly harried and unsettled, and grasping every opportunity to inflict a wound, anywhere until atlast the sword might be driven home.

Thus Rajaram's able 'Council of Ministers' began to feel that the Karnatak would open the way to victory and might be the only means of bringing about the conditions which would make "Second Front" in Karnatak a military possibility. The other enemies in that territory were to be reconciled. The smaller entities like Deshmukhs and Desais of various parganas in the Mysore plateau and the Madras Karnatak were to be made allies, they were to be induced to join hands with the Marathas, if necessary by use of force. Thus a road was opened to march the Maratha armies in the southern most part of the country. Jinji was to become a centre of the Maratha enterprise in the south (East coast). This was a soldiers view of warfare as the 'art of the possible'. And it was finally pursued and maintained.

But the 'Second Front' would become possible only if the Marathas could gain ready support from the Rajah of Tanjore Shahaji II, a cousin of Rajaram, the other Nayaks, and also the leaders of the Bedars in Karnatak territory. It was not an impossible task. The people in that territory were also hopelessly watching fall of their Hindu Rajah and they were willing to support the persons who would carry on fight against the allien invaders. Their own existence was in jeopardy. Keshav Pandit expressed the same view about the contemporary rulers, [5] from which it is clear that these men who mattered in Karnatak shared the same belief in the 'Common Cause' of uniting the people in the hour of calamity.

The siege of Raigadh was being pressed hard day by day. The 'Council of Ministers' realised the gravity of the situation. They knew that not any more time was to be lost. Life and death were trembling on the balance. The dawn of the day was to conduct them to a new scene of herculean toil in organising the state and removal of their new king to a place of greater safety. There was no time for repose. It was decided that Rajaram was to be escorted to Jinji by Pralhad Niraji, accompanied by many other loyal nobles and a large number of tursted lieutenants.

Journey to Jinji

On 5th April 1689, Rajaram left Raigadh for Pratapgadh.[6] And from now onwards, the Maratha king was moving from place to place and in a matter of six months till he finally left for Vellore, he was moving from one fort to another fort escaping the ever chasing Mughal army. On 5th August 1689, the Mughals after having taken Raigadh, Rohida and Torna, marched against Pratapgadh. The Mughal army was led by Kanhoji and Nagoji the two Marathas in the Mughal service under Zulfiqar Khan. They attacked the wadi at the foot of the fort. Rambhaji, the Maratha commander arrived at Pratapgadh and gave a battle. Many men were killed. Then he closed the gates of the fort. The Mughals laid siege to it. [7] Rajaram quickly left for

Panhala. He stayed there upto the middle of September. Meanwhile Pratapgadh also fell to the Mughals.

Finally the 'Council of Ministers' having viewed the grave situation decided that Rajaram should secretly leave Panhala. He was accompanied by Khandoji Nayak Pansambal, Pralhad Niraji, Nilkanth Moreshwar, Bahiro Moreshwar, Krishnaji Anant Sabhasad, Baji and Khandoji Kadam, Manaji More, Rupaji Bhosale, Santaji Jagtap, Khando Ballal, Vithal Trimbak and his three brothers. Bahirji and Maloji Ghorpade joined them on the way. [8]

Dressed like Gosavis (people who have abandoned the material world) Rajaram and his escorts left Panhala on 26th September 1689.[9] From Panhala, they reached Rangana fort. [10]

From Panhalgadh to Vellore, the distance is about five hundred miles. The hazards of journey were quite great. But the quiet and understanding self-confidence with which Rajaram entered upon this enterprise is one of the most remarkable events in the whole of his short but extraordinary career. He took with him no armies. Relying upon the energies of his own mind and upon the strength of his few followers and upon the sympathies of the great mass of the people, he started on this perilious journey but with a few companions. Never did he encounter more fearful peril. The Mughals had drawn arms against the Marathas. How could he hope to escape? The sword which killed Sambhaji was still shimmering with red blood. Everyone who had dared to oppose Aurangzeb was silenced by powerful Mughal sword. How could Rajaram venture with such a tiny band of the Marathas to beard this terrible lion in his den? The Mughals were quite active and fast in their work.

As early as 25th April 1689, orders were issued by Bahadur Khan to the Desai of Hukeri that, Rajaram who had left Raigadh was to be traced. 'He intends to run away. You should kill him or imprison him. His activities should be traced in that territory .... You should send messengers and

get information about him and intimate us overnight so that we will be able to capture him. If through slackness, the enemy passes through your territory .... You will be considered as culprit and will have to face dire consequences. Show no slackness in this respect.'[11] Promptly, the Desai of Hukeri gave the information of Rajaram's presence at Pratapgadh. On 6th May, the Desai was again ordered to keep Bahadur Khan informed about the activities of Rajaram. [12] And on 14th June, Asad Khan wrote to Lawrence Pit, the Dutch Governor of Nagapattan to keep watch on Rajaram 'whose fall is imminent'. Pit was to capture and present him to Aurangzeb. The French and others were also asked to help Pit.

Thus all the passage of Rajaram's march to Vellore was blocked and guarded closely by the Mughals. Abdullah Khan Barha, who was in the Bijapur territory was ordered to capture Rajaram. According to Ma'sir-i-Alamgiri. Rajaram who had three hundred followers of the rank of chiefs, passed through the territory of the Rani of Bednur. The Khan sent his eldest son Hasan Ali, in that direction and also reached himself by forced marches. [13]

Rajaram had taken refuge on the banks of Tungabhadra. A fight took place and more than a hundred men including Hindurao, Vyankoji, Bahirji and Maloji Ghorpade were taken prisoners. [14] Rajaram very cleverly escaped. Immediately the Rani of Bednur was suspected of concealing Rajaram. Santaji reached the scene of battle and Khan Matlab Khan and Sharza Khan resisted him. The Rani was forced to pay some fine. And within a few days the Maratha leaders, who were imprisoned escaped from the captivity. The rest of the prisoners were put to death. [15]

From Bednur, Rajaram arrived at Ambur. [16] Here he stayed in a temple and was well looked after by a Maratha sardar Baji Kakade. On 28th October, 1689 Rajaram arrived at Vellore. [17] From there he marched towards Jinji, a place fifty miles South East of Vellore and arrived at Jinji on 1st-2nd November. [18]

Thus Rajaram in his hazardous enterprise braved every peril. The most imminent and the most to be dreaded of all was captivity at the hands of the Mughal soldiers. For thirty two days they marched a distance of five hundred miles, with utmost toil. None of his companions showed any signs of exhaustion and weakness. If ever they thought about anything, it was the safety of their king alone. And they guarded him at the peril of their lives. Rarely one comes across such an example of matchless devotion and unquestioned loyalty of followers to their leader and leader in his turn to the cause of 'Liberty'. Thus the first phase of the plan, viz. opening the 'Second Front', commenced successfully.

5. Second Front : Jinji

A month before Rajaram left for Jinji, i.e. on 19th August 1689, [19] Harji Mahadik, the Maratha ruler of Jinji territory had released Keso Pant, the envoy sent by Sambhaji from the captivity. And within almost forty days of Keso Pant's release Harji Mahadik passed away. [20] The widow of Harji Mahadik took upon herself the task of governing the territory.

On 2nd November 1689, Rajaram with his followers entered Jinji, almost unceremoniously. The arrival of Rajaram was followed by a peaceful take over of the Government from Harji's widow. The local councillors, submitted to the new rule though reluctantly, and paid three lakh hon as a present. Rajaram sent a summons to all the persons in any important employment in the Government to make their appearance before him. The foremost task that lay ahead of Rajaram was the formation of his cabinet and appointment of ministers. The following names were to form 'ashtapradhan' or Council of eight Ministers :

1. Nilo Moreshwar Peshwa (Prime Minister).
2. Janardhan Pant Hanamante Amatya (Finance Minister)
3. Shankaraji Malhar Sachiv (Accountant General)

4. Ramchandra Trimbak Pande Mantri (Minister for Interrior)
5. Mahadaji Gadadhar Sumant (Foreign Minister).
6. Balaji Sunder Chief Justice.
7. Khandoji Ballal Chitnis. [21]

In addition to the appointment of ministers, a few more worthy people were honoured by Rajaram. Ramchandrapant, who remained in Maharashtra was given the title of Hukumat Panha and Shankaraji Narayan was made Sachiv.

A separate post of Pratinidhi was created for Pralhad Niraji, who virtually shouldered the burden of the Government at Jinji. Parsoji Bhosale was in high esteem and was honoured by the title 'Sena Saheb Subha' and was sent to the territory of Gondvan and Waradha (the present Vidarbha territory). Similarly Sidhoji Nimbalkar who had established Maratha rule along the banks of the Godavari river was honoured with the title of 'Sar Lashkar.' Khanderao Dabhade was sent to Gujarat and Baglana territory with the title of 'Sena Dhurandhar'.

Simultaneously, Timaji, son of Kesho Trimbak Pingale and Sunder Balaji were appointed subahdar of Jinji and Kunimedu respectively.

Raising of necessary financial resources was the first task facing the new administration. The ministers looked around to raise money from the European settlement on the East Coast. Three hundred hons were demanded from the English factors as an advance and a like amount from the French and the Dutch. Rich traders were urged to lend five thousand or even one thousand hons each. At the end of the year, five thousand hons more were demanded as a fine for buildings and fortifications of each European company. The Government raised money even by selling the fort of Tevenapatam. Similar efforts were made to procure one hundred barrel of gun powder and two thousand and five hundred weight of small shot, to carry on the war against the

Mughals. But the English very cleverly avoided this demand.

The functioning of new government at Jinji, brought a sense of relief to the Marathas. The general despair about the cause of Swaraj started disappearing from the minds of the people, and the feeling that the Maharashtra Rajya was doomed, got over slowly. The people looked upon the new government with greater hopes. They appeared to be reinspired. And the able ministers in the Government were active enough to achieve the cause of freedom.

On 20th December, Peshwa Nilo Pant achieved his first diplomatic success. Muhammad Sadiq, Yachappa Nayak, Ism'ail Khan Makh and other four thousand men who were in the Mughal employment after the fall of Golkonda, deserted the Mughal service. [22] They entered into an alliance with Rajaram and joined the Marathas at Chenapattan (Madras). They began to usurp the Mughal territory and collect revenue. The Mughal officers and troops were hopelessly outnumbered and were forced to take to their heels and seek shelter at Kunimedu.

Similarly, Laxmi Nayak deserted the Mughal service. He came to Rajaram at Jinji. He publicly appealed to the people to fight against Aurangzeb for the sake of their own country and the religion. [23]

In January 1690, he went to Rajaram with his three thousand cavalry and six thousand foot soldiers. But Rajaram did not permit him to join straight away as he suspected some mischief. Laxmi Nayak who had encamped outside Jinji, pleaded openly that 'We belong to the same religion. We must fight the common enemy.' [24] Finally, by February-March he joined the Marathas. According to Martin's information he had about twelve to fifteen thousand cavalry and musketeers.

Laxmi Nayak marched into the Karnataka and attained some initial success. The Mughals having learnt about the approaching army deserted their posts and some took shelter at Madras. But soon the scales turned. In the month of May

he was defeated by the Mughals. [25] And by September the Mughals recovered all the posts captured by Laxmi Nayak. [26]

6. Jinji : An Impregnable Fort

The fort of Jinji is situated in a central place from Arcot southwards to Trichinopoly, and from the Eastern Ghats to the Bay of Bengal. It virtually dominated the plain of Karnataka in the 17th century. It is a group of three different forts, located on three different hills, forming a triangle. The circumference of these hills is roughly three miles. 'These hills are rocky, steep and covered with such enormous boulders that they are almost unclimbable. Each of the three is fortified on all sides with line above line of stone walls, flanked bastions, filled with embrasures for guns, looped for musketry and pierced only by narrow and strong gate ways; and from each to the next, connected with these defences, runs a great stone-faced ranpart nearly sixty feet thick with a ditch over eighty feet wide outside it. The triangular space thus enclosed, forms the lower fort, and the three hills are the citadels. Up each of the three citadels leads, from the lower fort, a steep flight of steps of hewn granite built on and among the great boulders with which the sides of the hills are strewn.' [26a]

The three forts on three different hills could be described thus : Rajgiri on western side, Krishnagiri on northern side and Chandrayandurg on southern side. About half a mile south of Rajgiri is a fourth hill, though not connected to Jinji is called Chikalidurg or Chamartekri referred to by Bhimsen the author of Dilkusha.

It had three gates, one in northern wall called Trinomali gate, one in eastern wall, which was used as main entrance in the 17th century and due west, a small postern gate called Shaitandari. This is in the wall connecting Chandrayandurg with Rajgiri.

Of the three hills Rajgiri is about eight hundred feet above the plain and was most inaccessible. The path to Rajgiri was a steep and narrow way. '(It) leads from the lower fort

below, from the south-west, through gates in three lines of loopholed walls built one above another on the ridge across the road, and at length scales a mass of rock the top of which is nearly level with the summit of the citadel. But at this point, on the north side of the bluff, a great natural chasm, some twenty-four feet wide and fifty feet deep separates this mass of rock from the topmost terrace of Rajgiri. This chasm, the former owners (agents of the Vijaynagar empire) had artificially lengthened and widened, and they had made the only entrance to the citadel pass across a narrow wooden bridge leading to a stone gate commanded by more embrasures and loopholes. Orme says this point could be held by ten men against ten thousand.' [26b] Bhimsen, the author of Dilkusha, who was present in the Karnataka during this period describes the fort of Jinji thus 'Jinji is the name of the entire fort, six hill forts are here : Rajgarh, Krishnagiri, Chinangarh and Chamar Tikri are joined together. The circuit and wall of the outer (most) fort which includes a large city, have been joined to the city and forts and the name of Jinji given. It has tanks and large walls, and many buildings. Its climate is good.'

Looking at the topographical advantages it offered against any attack by the enemy, the Marathas made unanimous choice of this fort, which offered utmost safety to their king. In times to come the Marathas fully exploited this impregnable fort against the siege of Zulfiqar Khan for almost next seven years (1690-97).

7. Arrival of Zulfiqar Khan at Jinji

Having received the intelligence of Ism'ail Khan Makh and Yachappa Nayak going over to the Marathas and their becoming very strong in that area, Aurangzeb promptly dispatched to that area one of his wellknown general, viz. I'tqad Khan, who was lately awarded the title of 'Zulfiqar Khan Bahadur.' He left the imperial court at Koregaon at the end of November 1689, and marched by way of Raichur, Karnul Nandiyal, Kadapa and Garamkonda and then descended into the Karnataka plain (about June 1690),

fighting and capturing many forts on the way. He reached Conjeevaram in August and the environs of Jinji in the beginning of September. [27]

Rajaram having realized the insecurity of the fort, left further down south of Karnatak. [28] He had sent his troops along with Tanjore Trimbak Rao and Yachappa Nayak, north westwards into the Karnatak plateau to prevent the Mughal general's march into the eastern plains. [29]

The military strength of the Mughals was gradually increasing in this area. The Marathas were driven back and in October, Zulfiqar Khan wrote to the French to prevent Rajaram's possible escape by the sea in an English ship. [30]

On his arrival, Zulfiqar Khan, laid siege to the fort of Jinji. But he had no heavy guns nor enough ammunition for a bombardment. He asked for two hundred maunds of powder and five hundred gun shots, along with five hundred soldiers and thirty gunners from Madras. [31]

The English supplied him with two hundred maunds of powder and three hundred iron shots.

Meanwhile on 23rd November 1690, Nemaji Shinde, Mankoji Pandhare, Nagoji Mane and two thousand others deserted the Mughal service and joined Rajaram at Jinji. [32] They took charge of the defence work at Chakrapuri in the lower fort. In February Rajaram returned to Jinji. In his operations against the Mughals he received tremendous support from the Raja of Tanjore both in manpower and the supplies. At this time, two thousand army of Raja of Tanjore joined the Marathas. [33]

The Mughal army under Zulfiqar Khan was composed of twelve to fifteen thousand cavalry and twelve to fifteen thousand Rajput musketeers.

In April 1691, the Mughal army in Jinji had become quite large and well provisioned that in the opinion of European traders the country around expected a speedy fall of the fort. But in reality the siege had made little progress in all these

months. A complete blockade was beyond the capacity of the Mughal army. By now the Marathas having recovered from their first consternation began to harass them incessantly.

'The military superiority of the Mughals was rapidly lost after April, while the activity of the Maratha bands roving around stopped the supply of grain to Zulfiqar's camp. Many Deccani mansabdars who had accompanied him now deserted to the enemy.' [34] In May, fifteen hundred cavalry and two thousand Rajputs joined Zulfiqar Khan.

Letters from the spies informed Aurangzeb that Zulfiqar Khan had abandoned the trenches of Jinji. The retreat was partly because the Marathas blockaded the supplies to the Mughal army and he was also cut off from getting any reinforcement. Meanwhile Sayyid Lashkar Khan brought the supplies to Zulfiqar Khan's army.

Aurangzeb got quite alarmed due to the precarious condition his general was put to by the enemy. Immediately he ordered Asad Khan, camped at Nandiyal to hasten to his son's aid. [35] Similar orders were issued to prince Kambakhsh to proceed to Jinji. At this time Kambakhsh was busy with the siege of Wagingera. [36] He reached Kadapa on 4th October to join Asad Khan for onward march to Jinji.

While at Jinji, both the armies clashed two three times in June and there was considerable loss of life. Zulfiqar Khan abandoned his attack on Jinji and marched into South Karnataka. This was mainly to collect revenue from the Zamindars in that territory. At the end of August he passed by way of Cuddalore towards Tanjore. At the end of the year he captured Trinomali [37] (Twenty-three miles west of Jinji).

On 16th December 1691 Kambakhsh accompanied by Asad Khan reached Jinji. On 6th January 1692 they were enjoined at Jinji by Zulfiqar Khan, Sarfaraz Khan and Sayyid Lashkar Khan.[38]

8. Jinji : Its Defence

Asad Khan reached Jinji with his army and the strength of Zulfiqar Khan's army was considerably increased. Ism'ail Khan Makh rejoined the Mughal service but Yachappa Nayak continued with the Marathas.[39] Kakkar Khan, who had accompanied Kambakhsh was made faujdar of Jinji.[40] Zulfiqar Khan renewed the siege of Jinji with great vigour and took the post opposite the eastern gate near a hillock called Ali Madad[41] across one of the branches of the Jinji river. Asad Khan and prince Kambakhsh encamped three miles away from him, beyond the northern gate, on the road leading from Krishnagiri to Singhavaram hill. Ism'ail Khan was in the north-west of the fort in the direction of 'Karnatak-garh'. Each Mughal camp was walled around for safety. The gate of Shaitandari could not be blocked and the Maratha garrison freely came in and went out by it and brought in provisions whenever they liked. An outpost under Kakkar Khan watched the path through the Vetavalam wood by which supplies reached the fort, but the task was ineffectively done.

The Raja of Tanjore sent large amounts of money to Rajaram which enabled him to protect Jinji.[42] The Marathas continuously attacked the Mughals and Kambakhsh's camp in particular. 'One night a Maratha force five thousand strong sailed out of the north gate, but were defeated by the combined exertions of the entire Mughal army.'[43]

Zulfiqar Khan who saw the danger to the safety of Kambakhsh removed his tent from there and appointed Lashkar Khan to the north gate. He aimed at the capture of Chandrayandurg and thus directed his guns towards it as well as Pondicherry gate.

Though Zulfiqar Khan made very streneous efforts to take Jinji, yet the condition of besieging Mughal army was quite pitiable. In the words of Bhimsen 'The rain fell with excessive severity. Grain was dear. The soldiers, had to spend days and nights together in the trenches, thus they

suffered great hardships. In the rainy season the entire tract looked like one lake.' [44]

The Marathas captured Vellore in January 1692, which was in the possession of the Mughals. The general in charge of it was Krishna Antaji. [45] During the month of March, the Maratha force clashed with the Mughals near Pondicherry.[46] And if we have to believe the account furnished by Martin, it appears that though there was continuous fighting between the Marathas and the Mughal forces, yet the supplies continued to go inside the fort, unhindered. [47] This could take place because there was some secret understanding between the Maratha king Rajaram and Zulfiqar Khan.

Thus the fighting continued during May, June and July 1692, The siege was not very effective. On 19th July, Qasim Khan faujdar of Karnatak, left for Jinji. [48] The Marathas got their suplies from the western side of the fort through the jungles. After July another attack was launched by the Mughals, which resulted in the repetition of previous attacks. Many of their soldiers were injured and they had to retreat.

During September, the Marathas attacked the besieging army and were quite successful. They also captured one Mughal sardar holding a rank of three thousand Sawar and a lot of equipment. [49] But in October, the Mughals became fairly active and reached the wall of the fort. The Marathas fought bravely. On 21st November at night a Maratha force arrived near the siege line of Hamid Khan and challenged the Mughals. Immediately Jamshid Khan and others were sent for rescue. Later on Zulfiqar Khan himself arrived there. At the same time Asad Khan ordered Fath-ullah Khan to replace Ism'ail Khan towards Rajgadh (Jinji). But he flatly refused. [50] The Mughals were continuously attacking the Marathas. The news of a large Maratha army marching towards Jinji, brought some relief to Rajaram's besieged forces. Therefore, suspicion grew stronger than ever, that Rajaram and Zulfiqar Khan had a secret understanding.

On 13th December, Shankarajipant sent Dhanaji to Jinji. On 14th December, Ramchandrapant, having learnt about the severity of the siege of Jinji, sent Santaji, with fifteen thousand horse to Jinji. [51] According to the information of Khafi Khan 'They had fifteen to twenty thousand ready horse and many prominent Maratha sardars were in their employment. These two sardars had mercilessly attacked the imperial army. Santa was their leader. He was well known for ravaging prosperous cities and for attacking many of the famous generals. And those who had no occasion to meet him on the battle field, had to face one of the three consequences viz. they are killed, or they are wounded and captured or lastly they are defeated with their army.' [52]

The Mughals were terror struck with the very name of Santaji and Dhanaji. The bravest of the Mughal generals used to tremble whenever they used to hear about the presence of these two Maratha generals in their territory. Therefore hardly any reputed Mughal general dared oppose Santaji.

9. Ali Mardan captured by Santaji

The new army of the Marathas composed of such heroic generals, burst into Kanchi district. The news of arrival of this army caused a great terror among the European people and they rushed to Madras for taking refuge. Ali Mardan Khan, the faujdar of Jinji went out to encounter Santaji near Kaveripak, a pitched battle took place. Ali Mardan Khan was wounded and captured along with many other Mughal soldiers. [53] The Marathas recovered one thousand five hundred horses and six elephants. Later on he was released after paying a ransom of two lacs of rupees. [54] Many other Mughal sardars also secured their release in a similar way.

Thus the Marathas in their very first encounter with the Mughals got an overwhelming success and a lot of war equipment as well as cash.

10. Ism'ail Khan Makh captured

The Maratha cavalry set on march and reached the outskirts of Jinji. Zulfiqar Khan having noticed the superior number of the Marathas decided to retreat. Sayyid Lashkar Khan and Kakkar Khan joined him. But Ism'ail Khan who was on the west gate, received the orders to retreat rather delayed. Dhanaji Jadhav fell upon him with lightening speed with seven to eight thousand horse. Ism'ail Khan gave a fight, but finally he was wounded and captured. The Marathas got five hundred horses and two elephants. [55]

Thus the Marathas secured their successive second victory against a well positioned Mughal army. According to Martin, who while analysing the success of the Maratha army states, 'Their weapons of attack are spears and swords. There are some archers, but these are very few in number. In this respect the Mughals are superior to the Marathas. The aiming of the Mughals is better than the Marathas and they have a larger number of archers. Therefore the Marathas dare not go before the Mughals. The Marathas felt that the Mughals are superior in fighting. One thousand Mughals will not retreat in the face of three to four thousand Marathas. But the Marathas are superior in 'surprise attacks'. They are superior and successful in manual labour more than the Mughals. They overlook personal comfort. Their equipment is light and they are contended with little and carrying no retinue or baggage.' [56]

The victorious Marathas immediately proclaimed their authority over Haidarabai Karnatak, the Conjeeveram and Kadapa territories. Keshav Ramana was appointed by the Marathas as Subahdar with one thousand horse and four thousand foot soldiers. This happened in January 1693.

The Marathas having achieved these spectacular victories curtailed all free activity of the Mughals in the Karnatak and Madras. Their communication was stopped and lines of supply broken. Thus the Mughal army besieging Jinji got besieged in turn by the overwhelming force under Dhanaji.

11. Kambakhsh put under arrest and the siege abandoned

In the Mughal camp, there were dissensions between prince Kambakhsh, Asad Khan and his son Zulfiqar Khan. Kambakhsh was suspected of secretly negotiating with the Marathas. Asad Khan having duly considered the division within and a large number of enemy force outside, decided to abandon the trenches and thus the siege work of past two years, was given up hopelessly. But withdrawal was not very peaceful. Zulfiqar Khan, destroyed his big guns which were posted there and ordered his men to carry back the equipment as much as they could. The Marathas did not let go the retreating army without delivering some blows. When the Mughals were almost four miles away from their base camp, the Marathas caught them unaware. In the words of author of Ma'sir-i-Alamgiri, 'The audacity of the infidels passed all bounds, and death stormed the Muslims in the face.' [57] Zulfiqar Khan was forced to give a fight to the Marathas in order to save his life. The losses of the Marathas in men and animals were heavy. They were forced to withdraw into the fort. [58]

While in the Mughal camp, Prince Kambakhsh was put under arrest by Asad Khan and Zulfiqar Khan, for having opened secret correspondence with the Marathas. Meanwhile Santaji, with his singular victory over Ali Mardan Khan also arrived at Jinji. This brought great encouragement to the Marathas. According to Bhimsen, Santaji's great army, exceeded twenty thousand men and fell upon Zulfiqar Khan's army with great ingenuity. Thus the siege was abandoned by the Mughals on 16th December 1692. [59]

With the abandonment of the siege and arrival of the additional Maratha force, condition of the Mughal army worsened. Above all there was acute shortage of grain and other supplies and famine appeared to take greater toll of the Mughals than their enemy. Thus within a month's time, that is, by 22nd January 1693, Zulfiqar Khan marched out with his own division to bring in grain from Wandiwash [60] and other places.

Santaji having had the intelligence of Zulfiqar Khan's movement, made a rapid march in that direction and blocked his road at Desur, [61] ten miles southwards and completely encircled Zulfiqar Khan's army. After a period of two days the Mughal troops were attacked. 'They fired so many muskets that the soldiers and banjaras of our force were overpowered. Bullets were especially aimed at the elephants ridden by the imperial commanders. Rao Dalpat and his Bundelas boldly charged to clear a way ahead. The transport animals and guns stuck in the mud of the rice fields, artillery ammunition ran short, no power or shot was left with any musketeer.' [62] However, Dalpat Rao Bundela fought well and saved the Mughal division.

How long the Mughals were to survive on the scanty food grains brought by Zulfiqar Khan? within a very short period, the army was going to face the problem of acute shortage of food. The Maratha activity in that area was intensified and they had kept close watch on the Mughal soldiers. 'Every day from dawn to sunset the Marathas assembled round our camp and made demonstrations. No aid came from any source except the Gracious to the lowly, neither money nor food stuff arrived. All the army, high and low alike, were distracted and depressed.' [63] In short, the condition of the Mughal army was precarious. Gravely viewing the situation Zulfiqar Khan and Asad Khan sent a representative to Rajaram with a request to let them go unmolested. Rajaram did not take any decision immediately, as Santaji was away opposing a reinforcement that was expected to help the Mughals. According to Bhimsen, 'The Maratha generals and ministers pressed their king to continue war, crush the Mughal army which was half dead and thus establish his rule over that country before a new army could be sent by Emperor (Aurangzeb).' [64]

Why did not Rajaram conceed this request of great strategic import?

A partial explanation of Rajaram's softened attitude towards the Mughal sardars and his subsequent actions in not pressing for any severe military action against Zulfiqar Khan is available. Rajaram explained to Santaji that he had secretly reached an agreement with Zulfiqar Khan about the same, as Aurangzeb was not likely to survive for a long. After Aurangzeb's death he expected Zulfiqar Khan to occupy the territory of Golkonda and the Mughals would allow Rajaram to retain the territory of Bijapur.[65]

In addition to this secret agreement, according to Martin, Zulfiqar Khan paid one lac of rupees and ornaments worth sixty thousand rupees to Rajaram so that he could be allowed to withdraw respectably.

On the other hand, Zulfiqar Khan was urged by Rao Dalpat not to withdraw. But Zulfiqar Khan's soldiers particularly the artillery men by now had become weary and impatient. And on one fine morning the artillery men wound up their guns. The others also followed the suit. The Mughal generals were left with no alternative but to retreat. When Aurangzeb learnt about the loss of artillery and abandonment of siege, he ordered a recovery of rupees three lac from Asad Khan and rupees one lac fifty thousand from Zulfiqar Khan. [66]

Bhimsen has given a very graphic description of the Mughal camp at the time of the abandonment of the siege of Jinji. He writes 'Owing to the long continued starvation, most of the horses, camels and other transport animals, of the army had perished. Those who had a few left loaded just enough goods for themselves. Most men set fire to their belongings. Many in perplexity and helplessness at the terrible confusion and danger then raging .... took their own way forgetful of their friends and relatives. Many stores of the Emperor and nobles were left behind there .... When the army marched out of the camp, about a thousand Maratha horse came after them like a rear-guard and plundered the men of the army of their property.' [67]

This retreat of Zulfiqar Khan took place on 22nd January 1693 and at the same time Asad Khan and Kambakhsh left for the imperial court.

The Mughals retreated to Wandiwash. It took three days for Zulfiqar Khan to reach the place. Ten days later Qasim Khan, a newly appointed faujdar of Conjeeveram brought food grains from Kadapa. On the way, Santaji attacked him between Kaveripak and Conjeeveram. With timely help of Zulfiqar Khan, he was saved and the disaster was averted. Thus the Mughals were successful in carrying the grain to their camp at Wandiwash.

Thus by February, the Marathas had sufficient cause to be jubiliant, as they had forced Zulfiqar Khan Bahadur, the victor of Raigadh, to retreat to Wandiwash. He encamped there for four months (February-May 1693). He was now in a helpless condition. He had neither money nor material resources to continue the war.

The results of three years of continuous efforts, on the part of the Marathas showed that the 'Second Front' at Jinji, proved a success much beyond their expectations. The sudden blows delivered by Santaji and Dhanaji almost paralysed the generals of the Mughal army. The Marathas took advantage of the situation. They proclaimed their rule over Golkonda-Karnataka. And an expedition to capture Trichnopalli was launched in the month of March. Rajaram was personally present during the campaign. [68] Santaji laid siege to Trichnopalli. [69] Afterwards Rajaram went to Tanjore to meet Shahaji II. Although apparently the things were going well yet the Maratha leadership was in for some troubles. The misunderstandings between the king and his trusted lieutenants like Santaji and Bahirji Ghorpade, were coming to surface. This cleavage eventually lead to break up with disasterous results to follow.

By March 1693 Santaji's differences with Rajaram had become too sharp to be reconciled. In April-May he returned to Maharashtra. [70] In his place Dhanaji was appointed to command the troops.

12. Zulfiqar Khan makes fresh attempt and Capture Jinji.

Zulfiqar Khan who was quiet till May, at Wandiwash, now began his activities. His ultimate goal was capture of the fort of Jinji. On the earlier occasion, he had besieged Jinji without clearing off the territory surrounded by the loyal followers of Rajaram. These loyal persons helped Rajaram and the Maratha army and caused harassment to Zulfiqar Khan's army. The mischief had increased so much that the existence of the Mughal troops was in jeopardy. The only exception was Yachappa Nayak who did not remain loyal to Rajaram. After a serious quarrel with the Maratha king he deserted the service under the Marathas sometime in February-March 1693. Immediately he launched an attack on Satgadh and defeated the Marathas. During May-June, Rajaram attacked him at Vellore. However, the Nayak escaped and finally joined the Mughal service in November-December. [71]

The Mughal general Zulfiqar Khan was quick enough to take the advantage of the situation. He ordered Rao Dalpat Bundela's soldiers to attack the fort of Peru-mukkal. [72]

Then he marched towards Tanjore. Yachappa Nayak gave all the help to him. Sometime, between January and February (1694) he attacked Tanjore.[73] Shahaji II, the Raja of Tanjore was sitting on the horns of dilemma. His immediate neighbour, Nayak of Trichinopolly had joined the Mughals. Meanwhile the Marathas under Bahirji Ghorpade rushed towards Tanjore for its defence. [74] But it did not yield any fruitful results. The Raja had to bow before the Mughal pressure. He sought peace by paying a tribute of forty lacs (Chakrams) to the Mughals. On 22nd May, he signed a formal letter of submission and gave an undertaking that he would not extend any help to Rajaram. The terms of peace were quite heavy for Shahaji II. Besides this he was also asked to pay a tribute of thirty lacs annually, and cede the forts of Palamkota, Sittanur(?) and Srimushnam, Tittagudi, Trinnaur(?), Elavansore, Kalakurchi,

Pandalum, which had been mortgaged [75] to him but legitimately belonged to Rajaram.

As soon as Rajaram came to know about these developments, he sent his army to Palamkota and occupied it. Zulfiqar Khan's army along with Rao Dalpat arrived there in June and invested the village. They captured it on 23rd June 1694. [76]

The Mughal army thus consolidated its positions in the territory surrounding Jinji. Till September, that is till the end of the rainy season Zulfiqar Khan concentrated on reorganising his army and supplies. On 10th September, he took over all the territory close to Jinji, [77] i.e. Vetavalam forest through which provisions used to enter the fort and thus caused the blockade of Jinji.

In October 1694 Zulfiqar Khan renewed the siege of Jinji in right earnestness. He marched out of Wandiwash and encamped north of Changamon fort, forty-two miles west of Jinji. The Marathas cleverly managed to carry away some horses from the siege line camp. This caused some stir and suspicion in the minds of Daud Khan Panni, Kishor Singh Hada and Rao Dalpat Bundela about Zulfiqar Khan being in league with Rajaram. But this view does not appear to be correct. Rajaram during this period wrote to Mudhoji Naik Nimbalkar about the Mughals being powerful in Karnatak and Vetaval having been taken over by them. He had also expressed his fear that within a short period Jinji might also fall. However, Hindu Rao Ghorpade's excellent services proved of great help in giving a formidable resistance to the Mughals. He fervently appealed to send forces to defeat the Mughals. Santaji and Dhanaji were also asked to return. "The present situation is precarious. If you could come within a month the state would remain secure. The delay would be fatal and the state would be just lost." [78] This very clearly shows that Rajaram and Zulfiqar Khan were not in league. But Rajaram was passing through a most critical phase. The siege appeared to be a real danger. There was no

secret understanding between Rajaram and Zulfiqar Khan as presumed by Martin and others [79] and if there had been one in the past at least by now it appears to have been ended.

Shankarajipant, brought about reconciliation between Santaji and Rajaram. He gave an armed contingent with the former and sent him to Jinji with orders to raise the siege. Along with him was sent Yemaji Malhar Mutalik. Twenty-five thousand cavalry along with Hanumant Rao Nimbalkar and many other captains of fame and note [80] were also sent to Jinji.

Zulfiqar Khan's position had become precarious. His own lieutenants like Sarfaraz Khan and others deserted him and returned to the imperial court. Daud Khan Panni and Kishor Singh Hada openly expressed his collusion with the Marathas, thus they quietly withdrew from taking any active part in the operations against the Marathas. Thus the year 1695, passed without effecting any blows to the Marathas. The Mughal army during this period concentrated more on looting and burning the surroundings. 'At Wandiwash the people fled in fear of the Mohammadan army and took refuge in the Changamon hill.' Therefore there was not much cooperation from the local inhabitants also to the Mughal army.

During October-November, Zulfiqar Khan laid siege to Vellore. Within a very short time the news of Maratha army marching into Eastern Karnatak under the two generals, Dhanaji and Santaji reached the Mughal camp. This caused great alarm and fright among the people. And many of them sent their families to Madras, for reasons of safety.

At the end of December 1695 with Dhanaji's arrival near Vellore, Zulfiqar Khan was forced to raise the siege. [81] Then Dhanaji encircled the Mughal faujdar in Teruvadi, but Zulfiqar Khan promptly came to his help and relieved him from any further distress. From there Zulfiqar Khan

marched towards Arcot. By March 1696 Santaji arrived at Jinji and paid his obeisance to Rajaram.[82] Thus with the arrival of Santaji, the Maratha forces became very powerful and it was almost beyond the capacity of the Mughals to face them effectively. Zulfiqar Khan was already stranded as far as money and reinforcements were concerned.

In April 1696, a skirmish took place between him and Santaji near Arni and Santaji was repulsed. Zulfiqar Khan confined himself in the fort of Arcot in a solely defensive way.

Thus once again the Marathas humbled the great Mughal general Zulfiqar Khan. He was forced to be on his defensive and was left without any initiative. A similar situation was forced upon him three years back, i.e. in February 1693, when he was compelled to retreat from Jinji. Once again the Marathas established their superiority over the vast Mughal forces.

But destiny has its own way and it is certainly not the way to be guessed. The differences between Rajaram and Santaji once again came to surface. Santaji was unwilling to serve at Jinji. Similarly, the extremely strained relations between Santaji and Dhanaji caused a breakup. Consequently in May 1696 Santaji left Jinji for Maharashtra and was murdered on the way.

The internal feuds weakened the unity of the Marathas and ultimately the cause of Swaraj suffered to some extent.

After the disappearance of the two powerful Maratha generals from the war theatre of Jinji, Zulfiqar Khan pressed the siege hard. By August, the scales of war had turned against the Marathas and they were in a miserable condition. both militarily and financially. On 2nd August, Rajaram sent his natural son Karna, along with Shankaraji Malhar to Zulfiqar Khan to seek peace. Zulfiqar Khan reciprocated the offer by sending Trimbakrao from his army to Rajaram with a message that the Maratha king should meet him[83] in person.

13. Zulfiqar Khan negotiates peace

But some of the Factory Records state that the move to negotiate peace was first initiated by Zulfiqar Khan. On 29th July, Zulfiqar Khan sent Ram Singh and Mondafhy with another chief with five or six hundred horse to Jinji. Ram Singh who negotiated talks, gave a present of fifteen thousand rupees to Rajaram and Rajaram in turn was to send Karna with him to Zulfiqar Khan. Rajaram was expected to receive thirty-five thousand rupees more subsequently. Raja Karna was to stay with Zulfiqar Khan for two months, at the end of this period he was to receive another sum of fifty thousand rupees and a queen of Rajaram in the Mughal captivity was to be delivered back. Thus Rajaram was to receive a total sum of one lac rupees and in turn, he was expected to hand over the fort of Jinji to Zulfiqar Khan. In case the conditions were not complied with, Karna was to return to the Maratha camp. According to Prof.J.N. Sarkar, it was Rajaram, who was in need of money and therefore had initiated the move. From the above letter, the circumstances and the conditions imposed about the talks, are quite clear. [84]

From the subsequent events it appears that these talks failed and Karna came back to his father in the middle of October. And Zulfiqar Khan renewed the siege of Jinji on 8th November 1697 [85] once again.

Now before we conclude the Jinji episode, it would be worthwhile examining the events that took place in the Karnataka simultaneously. The Marathas exploited the territory of the Karnataka as an excellent war-theatre against the Mughals, and delivered the crushing blows to their enemy.

14. Karnataka - A New Theatre of War

Though the Marathas were, to a large extent, successful in opening the 'Second Front' at Jinji and carrying out the operations against the Mughals, yet it did not prove to be very effective immediately. The Mughal armies followed Rajaram through Karnataka upto Jinji. The Mughal line of

supply was not broken up. The Mughals during that period were still the masters of the territory through which the supplies and communication passed to Jinji. It was the territory of Karnataka; the territory comprising of Bijapuri and Golkonda Karnataka, as those provinces were then called. It came under the possession of the Mughals after the fall of Bijapur and Golkonda sultans. Aurangzeb, appointed his own officers to Bijapuri Karnataka but did not make many changes in Golkonda Karnataka. The Desais, Nadgaudas, Sarnadgaudas and other chief petty officers in this territory, had not openly declared their allegiance either to the Mughals or to the Marathas since the fall of their respective former rulers. The Marathas and the Mughals, each in their own way conveniently presumed them to be on their respective side.

Geographically Golkonda Karnataka and Bijapuri Karnataka were sub-divided into uplands and plains. The upland of the Golkonda Karnataka began south of Nandiyal (a frontier Fort of Bijapurl territory) and included Sidhout, Gandikota, Gutti, Garamkonda and Kadapa (presently in Andhra State). Bijapuri Balaghat lay west of Golkonda Karnataka and included Sera and Bangalore districts (Belgaum, Sampgaon, and Raibag-Hukeri of the present Karnataka State).

The Marathas very rightly understood the strategic importance of the Karnataka region. All the important roads and communication to Jinji had necessarily to pass through this region. This was very securely guarded by the Mughal officers at various posts. If the Marathas wanted to maintain smooth line of supply and communication to Jinji, then they had no alternative but to attack these posts. Secondly, this was the region where they could conveniently lodge a new offensive against the distant Mughal forces. Further they looked upon this region in order to explore new avenues of state revenue. These territories were not well managed by the newly appointed Mughal officers, therefore, they thought of

exploiting the same. So they planned their war strategy afresh, and selected Karnataka region, as a new theatre of war. And, indeed subsequent events have proved that their judgement was well reasoned.

The first note of the Maratha-activities in this region was taken by Aurangzeb in November 1690. During this period Aurangzeb's encampment was at Galgale (on the South Bank of the Krishna river). On 12th November, Umdat-ul-Maulk Asad Khan set out by command 'to punish the enemy roving on the further side of the river Krishna.' [86] In fact he went to lay siege to Bhudargadh which was under the Marathas in Bijapuri Karnataka.

Bhudargadh stands on a bluff rock, thirty-six miles south of Kolhapur. It is situated on one of the six great ridges of the Sahyadri, which stretches east and north east across the Kolhapur plateau. As the great Mughal general Asad Khan himself was despatched to besiege the fort, its strategic importance during the Mughal-Maratha war must have been very great.

After laying siege and waiting for some time, it became clear to him that it was not possible to take the fort. The Desaies, Deshmukhs and Nadgaudas of Ajre sub-division took great pains and underwent a lot of hardships in sending constant supplies to the besieged. [87] Asad Khan could not break this line of supply and thus effect a complete blockade of the fort. Ultimately, the Mughals lifted the siege in March 1691. [88]

In April-May, Bedars in Saggar became very strong. They had joined hands with the Marathas and started ravaging the Karnataka territory under the Mughals. Their chief was Pidya Nayak, well known for his organization and fighting ability. Aurangzeb was forced to send one more division under his best generals to subdue him. Thus the strength of the Mughal army was further reduced. The Marathas swiftly took the advantage of the situation and invaded Raibagh

Hukeri [89] territory, i.e. the western region of the northern Karnataka.

Alappa Desai of Hukeri was in league with the Marathas. An officer of Aurangzeb sent a threatening letter to the Desai for this treacherous act, at the same time, he was induced to join the Mughal service. [90] Simultaneously, Hukeri and region around was reinforced by another Mughal contingent. But it did not yield much desired result. The Marathas on their part persuaded the Desai to meet Ramchandrapant who was expected to visit Bhudargadh. [91] The Marathas were ultimately successful in winning over the Desai. Later on a certain Nagoji Tukdev [92] was sent to the Desai, conveying a feeling of appreciation from the Maratha ruler.

As the situation was going beyond control of the Mughal officer Inayat Ullah, he wrote accordingly to Abdul-Mukarrim, the Diwan of Bijapur. Immediately i.e. by May-June, a strong force under Jansipar Khan was sent to that territory to punish the Marathas. [93]

In January 1692 a Maratha force appeared near Gulbarga. Ma'mur Khan from Aurangabad,Momi Khan faujdar of Ter and Khwaja Zafar'Ali of Shahgadh were asked to cooperate with each others and chastise the Marathas. In addition to this Siyadat Khan was also asked to go to Gulbarga. [94]

By now, Santaji, with his mobile force had alighted in the Karnataka region. Jan Nisar Khan and Tahaur Khan the two sons of Salabat Khan, were ordered to defend the Karnataka territory. These two brave generals clashed with Santaji in Karnataka. A severe battle took place. Many people on either side were killed and wounded. Jan Nisar Khan and Tahaur Khan both were wounded on the battle field. With great difficulty they managed to escape. Many other reputed Mughal sardars were put to flight. The Marathas got large share of booty and many Mughal soldiers were made captives. [95] Santaji was well rewarded for the victory over the Mughals. He received the rights of Deshmukhi of Miraj and

other twenty-two villages. He was handsomely praised and got an extraordinary tribute for the courage he showed during this period in defeating the very brave Mughal generals like Shaikh Nizam, Sharza Khan, Ranamast Khan and Jan Nisar Khan. [96]

Till the end of rainy season there were no noticeable activities in this part. But soon Aurangzeb received reports that Dhanaji and Santaji with an army of seven thousand men had siezed some forts in Dharwar-Belgaum region and invested the city of Belgaum. They caused a lot of damage to the crop. By 27th October, the Maratha leaders left for Dharwar and from there they retired to Nargund. [97] In October, the Marathas captured Chikodi and carried away horses and property.

Aurangzeb was quite perturbed with the news of Maratha activities in the Karnataka. He ordered Hamid-ud-din Khan to proceed to Belgaum and Matlab Khan to Dharwar. As Hamid-ud-din Khan was proceeding to Dharwar on his way near Athni, Yalbarsh Khan the Mughal thanedar of Athni went to see him. In the meantime the Marathas attacked his post. Seven men from the Mughal side were killed and one was injured. [98] Qasim Khan another important officer in Karnataka was reinforced and was ordered to guard Bankapur in addition to his other duties. By middle of November he reached Salhati. Santaji and Dhanaji were in Koppalgadh. Qasim Khan reached twenty miles away from them. But it appears that there was no clash. [99] 'But a little later Matlab Khan defeated the enemy near Dharwar.' [100]

By the end of the year 1692, Shamji, the Gumasta of Narsingrao, Jagirdar of Nulvi, joined the Marathas and captured the fort of Hubli. But Devaji Hanamrao Desai of Hubli a servant of the Mughals defeated him with great effort. [101] In the third week of November Firuz Jang captured Kunjargadh. [102]

In the beginning of January 1693, the Marathas appointed Keshav Ramana as subahdar of Golkonda-Karnataka with

one thousand horse and four thousand foot. [103]

Santaji, who had come back triumphant after raising the siege of Jinji, was very active in Bijapur territory (October 1693). 'Himmat Khan went out in pursuit of Santa and overtook him about 22nd October. [104] The Maratha general, at the head of a vastly superior force, turned at bay at Mandgaon (or Mandvagaon?) and attacked Himmat, whose small column took refuse at the foot of the village, 'the enemy occupying three sides and the Khan one.' Evidently at this stage reinforcements under Hamid-ud-din and Khwaja Khan joined Himmat, and the Mughals resumed the chase of the raiders. They gained a signal victory over Santa and his Berad allies (about 14th November) at the village of Vikramhalli. Two hundred of the Berads and three hundred of Santa's own men were slain, and three hundred mares and some flags and kettledrums captured (Akh.19 Nov.). Then the Mughal generals quarrelled. Hamid-ud-din and Khwaja Khan, taking offence, left Himmat Khan, gave up pursuit and returned towards Gulbarga. Himmat alone followed the enemy, Santa now safely divided his force, detaching four thousand troopers under Amrit Rao to raid Berar, while he himself marched with six thousand horsemen towards Malkhed, sending in advance threatening letters to the Deshmukh of that place to this effect, 'for long time past you have not paid the chauth. Send me immediately seven thousand hun.' The couriers who brought these letters were arrested by the Mughals and put to death.'

'Foiled in his object, Santa turned aside to the hills of Torgul(?) [105] in the Berad country, while Himmat Khan halted at Malkhed, not daring to venture into that wild and broken region. In a day or two the elusive Maratha leader was out again and reported to be marching upon Haidrabad. Himmat Khan, now joined by Sayyid Abdullah, was immediately on his track and drove him into the small fort of Alur (14 m.s.w. of Malkhed). This happened about 21st November 1693.' [106]

The next few months, till June 1694, Karnataka was comparatively quiet. In June, Khan-i-Zaman Fath Jang from Bidar Bakht's army laid siege to Nargund (30 m.N.E. of Dharwar). Fath Jang tried to take the fort by assault. But the attempt failed, later on he abandoned the siege and in his place Rajah Udwat Singh of Urchha was asked to lay siege. The Mughals captured it in November and changed its name to Bahadur-nagar. [107]

Thus for a period of four years, the Maratha forces kept occupied the Mughals, with all their resources tied down in Karnataka. Though there were no convincingly major battles fought during these four years, yet, Aurangzeb himself had to encamp in that territory and detach a few of his best generals to meet the impending attack of the Marathas. The next year from November 1694, till October1695 was quite peaceful. The Maratha general Santaji had left Maharashtra for Jinji in order to relieve Rajaram's forces at Jinji. [108]

15. Battle of Dodderi and death of Qasim Khan

In October-November 1695, Santaji returned from Jinji, ravaged the country of Karnataka and was being chased by Himmat Khan, who was entrusted by Aurangzeb to defend the territory of Bijapur.

At this time Aurangzeb, who had encamped at Islampuri, learnt that Santaji after robbing the imperial dominions was hastening with heavy loads to northwest of Mysore. Immediately he appointed Safshikhan Khan, Muhammad Murad Khan (the pay master of Prince Kambakhsh's army, Khanazad Khan (later Ruhullah Khan II), Sayyid Asalat Khan, Mirza Hasan, the cousin brother of Mukhtiyar Khan, many Deccani sardars along with the army of Kambakhsh. Though on paper army consisted of twenty-five thousand men, actually about five thousand men were assigned the mission of defeating and destroying Santaji, who had created havoc in the region of Dodderi. The army was ordered to operate in union with Qasim Khan, who also had

good standing army and artillery. They joined Qasim Khan about twelve miles from the expected track of the Marathas.

Qasim Khan wished to entertain Khanazad Khan and other imperial guests. He brought out from the fort of Adoni, showy articles like Karnataki tents still unused, gold, silver, copper and chinaware of all kind. Next day, he sent them with his own advance tents and those of other amirs at a distance of six miles. But then all was not well. Santaji who had close intelligence of the movements of the Mughal troops, planned his strategy of encircling the enemy well in advance. He showed highest tactical power in planning the operation. He kept his divisions in an alerted and ready position, in order to meet any eventuality. He divided his army in three divisions, ensured their timings, and coordinated the moves in such a way that he could achieve the most effective results with minimum use of man power.

The first division went to plunder the advance-camp, the second was ordered to encounter the Mughal army and the third division was kept in reserve, to meet any emergency. Burmappa Nayak, the zamindar of Chitaldurg who was humbled by Qasim Khan, had also joined Santaji with his son.

A little after mid-night the first Maratha division fell upon the advance tents, slew and wounded many men and carried off everything. Heavy equipment and tents were set on fire. As soon as the news reached Qasim Khan, who without waking up Khanazad Khan from sleep hastened to the battle-field. He had not crossed even four miles distance, when the second Maratha division fell upon the camp. Khanazad Khan, woke up almost with a big surprise, left the camp, baggage and porters behind and hastened quickly to help Qasim Khan. The Marathas who were estimated to be between eight to ten thousand in each division blockaded the passage of Khanazad Khan. Thus he could not reach Qasim Khan's help. Qasim Khan after having learnt this intelligence became desparate. The Marathas had an over-whelming

number, as well as black musketeers known as best marksmen; in addition to it they also had mobile light cavalry. A fierce battle was fought for the whole day. Khanazad Khan and Murad Khan showed tremendous courage while fighting against the Marathas. The whole Mughal army was terror-struck. The Maratha swords men were so effective, that at night the Mughal sardars did not alight their elephants, nor did they allow their horses to take rest, in anticipation of a fresh Maratha attack at any hour of the night.

But it was only next morning that the reserve division of the Marathas fell upon the Mughals and looted the baggage. A pitched battle took place. Many were slain on both sides. Inspite of the steadiness of the Mughals and the destruction caused by them, the Marathas did not yield one foot of ground or showed any wavering.

For quite some time, the Mughal soldiers did not have food to eat nor the animals had any fodder. On the other hand, they were being constantly harried by the Marathas. The Mughal garrison shut the door of the fortress for the new force. [109] Khanazad Khan and Qasim Khan, shared the food they had brought with them. The common soldier had nothing to eat except the water of the tank, not to speak of grass and grain for horses and elephants. As the night closed, the Marathas surrounded the Mughals, who were always in readiness to fight. But for three days the Marathas only appeared in sight without giving a fight.

On the fourth day after looking for a suitable opportunity, Burmappa Nayak's army attacked the Mughals. Mirza Hassan and many other sardars were killed. The Mughals could not spare any time to recover their dead bodies due to the constant fear of the Marathas. Muhammad Murad Khan's son Khudadad was wounded. Qasim Khan and Khanazad Khan were completely shaken up. They held consultations and resolved to march to Dodderi, and take shelter in the small fort. [110]

But it was not an easy task. The Mughal army was completely enveloped by the Marathas. They had to fight their way. They were able to achieve this in the evening only and reach the vicinity of the fort. The Marathas gave up the chase and retired.

The fort of Dodderi was a small one and its stock of food grains was also limited. To aggravate the evil next morning the Maratha musketeers fell upon them. The Mughal artillery and ammunition had already been plundered, and what little was carried with the soldiers had got exhausted. In the words of the author of Ma'sir-i-Alamgiri, 'The troops sat down in helplessness after running about, after groaning and sighing for some hours. As the enemy continued to hail musket balls, many men were destroyed here also.'

The survivers, seeing the gates of the fort closed, forced their way into it. But the garrison attacked them, one third of the Mughal soldiers were slain. On the day, they entered the fort, all the soldiers, high and low alike were given bread of Jowar out of the provisions of the place and straw to the cattle. On the second day neither was bread left for the men nor straw for horses. Men died of hunger. The condition of the animals was worse. They chewed each others tails, mistaking them for straw and the remaining oxen 'lean like the donkey's tail' were all slaughtered and eaten away by the Mughals. Thus there was total starvation. To worsen the situation the Marathas besieged the fort. Qasim Khan died shortly. [111] (after three days). Qasim Khan's death depressed the Mughals still more. Of the common soldiers, many left the fort and joined the Marathas. The Marathas stripped them off whatever money and gold they had carried. Santaji's men carried out a roving business and sold the goods to the besieged at fantastically high price.

Very shortly, whatever little was left in the fort like food and water was all exhausted. The Marathas adopted very stringent methods in tightening the blockade. The living conditions of the Mughals became unwholesome. Then

Khanazad Khan, sent his diwan and a Deccani sardar to beg for terms of capitulation. Santaji demanded one lac hons, besides the elephants, horses, cash and other baggage. The Deccani sardar instigated Santaji and said, 'What are you asking? Raise your terms, Khanazad Khan alone can pay this amount as his ransom.' At last the ransom was fixed at twenty lacs of rupees. [112]

Santaji's men collected all the baggage and the animals from the Mughals. The Mughal sardars signed the bonds of surity and kept their relations as hostages. The Mughals on their part did not abide by the terms of release, though Santaji strictly honoured his commitments.

For two days he allowed the Mughal soldiers to go out of the fort, fed them with fresh food and breathed in them a new life. On the third day Khanazad Khan left for the Mughal Court at Islampuri with a Maratha escort.

Thus came to an end the most glorious battle Santaji ever fought in the Karnataka. This battle proved that the Marathas were matchless in planning the battle strategy and conducting the same in a most successful manner. Therefore there is no wonder if the Mughal sardars trembled with the mention of the very name of Santaji or Dhanaji. But what was more conspicuous about this battle was the magnanimous behaviour of the Maratha general Santaji. He was a generous and lion hearted person. He treated the Mughal soldiers, his defeated foe as human beings. Once the peace terms were settled, he accorded all the help to them. He proved to his contemporary world, by his exemplary behaviour that he did not bear any animosity towards the men in the opposite camp. He made it clear that, he was fighting against the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb, who had invaded the homeland of the Marathas and thus did not have any grouse against those ordinary and common people in the Mughal employment. Such examples are rarely found wherein a victor has shown so much of generosity and magnanimity towards a vanquished foe. It is more delightful

to note that the details of this battle come to us from the pen of Muslim historians like Saqi Must'ad Khan and Khafi Khan. [113]

16. Himmat Khan killed by Santaji

Aurangzeb was grieved to learn the miserable fate of his selected army and chosen sardars. He even did not allow them to come back to see him. Immediately, he ordered Himmat Khan with one thousand cavalry to proceed to Basavapatan and rescue the Mughal army and punish the Marathas. [114]

Subsequent to the episode of Dodderi, Santaji divided his army into two divisions. Himmat Khan crossed the distance of about thirty two miles and fell upon one of the divisions led by Santaji himself. 'On 20th January 1696, he (Santaji) appeared before Himmat Khan's position at the head of ten thousand cavalry and nearly the same number of infantry. His Karnataki foot musketeers - the best marksmen in the Deccan, took post on a hill. Himmat Khan, with a very small force advanced to attack and dislodged them from it, slaying 500 of them. Then he drove his elephant towards the place where Santa was standing, when suddenly he was shot by a bullet in the forehead and fell down unconscious into the *hawda*. His driver wanted to turn the elephant back, but the captain of his contingent (Jamdar) Ali Baqi, told the driver 'The Khan is alive, urge the elephant onward. I shall drive the enemy back.' But, he too was wounded, thrown down to the ground and carried off by the enemy. Then his son fell fighting. Santa received two arrow wounds. The leaderless imperialists fell back to their trenches. At midnight Himmat Khan breathed his last. Three hundred of his men were dispersed and fled to various places. The rest held their fortified enclosure successfully for some days, after which the Marathas withdrew from its siege and went away with the captured baggage of the Khan.' [115]

On 22nd January 1696, the news reached Aurangzeb about Himmat Khan's miserable plight. Immediately,

Hamid-ud-din Khan was ordered to join Himmat Khan and relieve him at Basavapatan. But within a week's time i.e. by 28th January, Aurangzeb received the news of Himmat Khan's sad end. Basavapatan which was besieged by Santaji's troops was being defended by Sayyid Azamatullah and Muhammad Isa. On first February Hammid-ud-din Khan started from Adoni, with twelve thousand men. After about twenty miles march he was attacked by Santaji's troops. This happened on 28th February. But the Marathas were driven back and their camp was looted by the Mughals.[116]

'Santa fled to Khardurg (?) The victorious Hamid, after a halt of two or three days for burrying his dead and tending his wounded soldiers, marched to Basavapatan. Here a few days later Santa reappeared, but Hamid-ud-din made a sally from the fort and drove away the Marathas taking two hundred mares and many weapons from them. On receiving the despatches of these victories, the Emperor in open Court praised Hamid-ud-din very highly and wrote to Zulfiqar Khan, 'That is how a soldier fights!' [117]

On 6th March 1696 Santaji attacked him again. But the Marathas were repulsed. Many Marathas were killed and wounded. [118]

In the meantime, Aurangzeb ordered Prince Bidar Bakht, 'to proceed to the relief of Basavpatan, who was then busy at Panhala. But by the time Bidar Bakht reached Chitaldurg and Basavpatan, the Maratha General had already left that territory to meet Zulfiqar Khan at Jinji. He ordered Hamid-ud-din Khan to go on the pursuit of Santaji.' [119] Later on he was asked to remain at Balaghat.

In June the Marathas appeared near Tanjore. [120] In July, they threatened, Sadashiv Naik, the Desai of Sondhe, for making payments of the revenue to the Mughal officers. He was warned that all the revenue was to be paid to the Marathas [121] only. After July 1696, we do not notice any activities of the Marathas in the Karnataka region. Thus by the end of August 1696, Karnataka ceased to be any

more a theatre of war between the Mughals and the Marathas.

17. End of Second Front : Jinji captured by the Mughals

From October 1689 till October 1697, that is for a period of eight years the Marathas maintained their 'Second Front' at Jinji in a most successful way. Their main purpose was to draw a division in the Mughal forces, which were concentrating in Maharashtra. Secondly, Jinji proved to be the best shelter, and a place of safety and security for their king. During these eight years both these objectives were achieved effectively. The Marathas needed time to recover from the shock of tragic end of Sambhaji. They needed time for large scale militarily preparations to meet effectively the Mughal invasion. The 'Second Front' at Jinji served both the objectives.

The two ministers, Ramchandrapant and Shankarajipant, whom Rajaram had left in Maharashtra spared no energies in achieving these objectives. In 1697, they were confident of fighting the Mughals on homeland. The necessity of continuing the 'Second Front' at Jinji had thus ceased. In eight years period they were not only sure of protecting the king, but were equally confident of defeating the invaders.

Therefore, gradually, the entire policy of fighting at Jinji had undergone a change.

After the return of Karna from Zulfiqar Khan's camp, it became quite evident to the Marathas, that the enemy was quite keen on taking over Jinji. Their own strength was reduced to the minimum. Continuous fighting would have brought them nothing but disasterous results. Their best generals were away in Maharashtra. In the death of Santaji the Marathas received a great setback. But all hopes were not given up. Rajaram reached a secret understanding with Zulfiqar Khan. It was a great diplomatic triumph for the ministers of Rajaram. They could well read the mind of the old Mughal general, who hoped that Aurangzeb, his master, would die soon. And after his death, he would carve a

principality for himself in Karnataka. He was well aware of the potential strength of the Marathas and equally well he was aware of the consequences of the struggle for succession amongst Aurangzeb's sons. Under these conditions he hoped only the Marathas would support him. Accordingly he chose his course of action; which well suited his ambition. Therefore he remained neutral and many a time passed secret intelligence about the plans of military action to the Marathas so that they could take timely measures to save themselves.

Thus the episode of Jinji took an entirely different turn, to the greater advantage of the Marathas.

Zulfiqar Khan who had informed Aurangzeb about the peace negotiations with Rajaram, was ordered to abandon the efforts. He received strict orders to capture Jinji. Thus in November 1697, the siege of Jinji was renewed in right earnestness.

Zulfiqar Khan divided the various positions to be occupied among his captains. He, with his contingent, occupied the northern gate towards the Singhavaram hill; Ram Singh Hada, was placed behind the fort, at the western gate and Daud Khan Panni took position at the foot of the hill, before Chikkalidurg. Though Daud Khan's division lacked artillery and siege material, he captured Chikkalidurg in one day and one night, through a reckless attack.

According to Bhimsen, 'If Zulfiqar Khan had wished it, he could have taken the entire fort the next day. But his secret policy was to prolong the siege in order to keep his army together enjoy his emoluments and escape the hardships of active duty on some new expedition.' [122] Therefore, he let known the Marathas that his attacks were more apparent than real. And he gave Rajaram enough time to escape before the fall of the fort. The siege prolonged for two more months.

Wilkes has fantastic tale to tell us about the collusion between Zulfiqar Khan and the Marathas. He says, 'To

preserve appearances, it was necessary to report (to the Emperor) frequent attacks and repulses. On the other hand, Daud Khan second in command of the Mughal army, drank largely of the best European liquors, and when full of the god would perpetually volunteer the extirpation of the infidels. Zulfiqar necessarily assented to these enterprises, but always gave secret intelligence to the enemy of the time and place of attack, and the troops of Daud Khan were as often repulsed with slaughter.' [123]

Rajaram, noticing the fall of Chikkalidurg and the Chandrayandurg, decided to quit the fort. He left for Vellore on 26th December in the company of chief Maratha officers. His family was left behind. Followed by this there was bristle activity in the Mughal camp.

'Then Zulfiqar Khan gave the orders for assault. While Daud Khan with a large force was noisily exploring a track for scaling Chandrayandurg from the south and had drawn the defenders to that side, Dalpat Rao scaled the northern walls of Krishnagiri and captured the outerfort, after a severe struggle. The garrison retreated to an inner fort called Kalakot, which Dalpat Bundela entered pell-mell and occupied. The surviving Marathas took refuge in Rajgarh or the highest fort.' [124]

Daud Khan entered Chandrayandurg. From there he advanced towards Krishnagiri. Seeing no further escape the men begged for capitulation. The Mughals secured a lot of horses, camels and equipment.

'The family of Rajaram was at Rajgadh. Zulfiqar Khan had captured the entrance to Rajgadh, meanwhile Ram Singh Hada reached Rajgadh by crossing the chasm at its foot by means of a wooden gangway. The royal family begged for safety and Zulfiqar Khan granted it. Nearly four thousand men, women and children were found in the fort, but very few combatants.' [125]

18. Jinji And Karnataka - The Seven Years In Retrospect (1690-1697)

The sinking of the year 1697 and the dawn of the new year struck a great blow to the cause of Swaraj. Rajaram at Jinji had to bow before the increased Mughal power and the intensive siege of the fort of Jinji. He knew well that the mission at Jinji was over and any overstay there would result in his defeat and destruction, and ultimately that of the Maratha kingdom. In a great hurry he left that place for Maharashtra. He acted upon the plan faster than his opponents could possibly think about his moves. He was well ahead of them and reached Vishalgadh safely in February 1698.

Though the king arrived safely back to the land of Maharashtra, yet the Marathas lost the precious fort of Jinji to the Mughals. In a way the established government of the Marathas appeared to be over thrown and for a while people were perplexed at the fate of the king and his kingdom. But then they only had to wait for some more time and the events that followed were to prove how unfounded was their fear.

On the other hand the Mughal army at Jinji had an occasion to celebrate the victory of Jinji. The news of fall of Jinji was immediately conveyed to Aurangzeb at Islampuri. He no doubt rewarded his generals and army men lavishly, yet he was not happy over it. How could he have been? For the past seven years he had sent his best generals, a large army, a great amount of wealth and had diverted major resources of the empire to fight the Marathas and to capture their fountain-head, the king Rajaram. But he learnt in disgust that much before his generals could lay their hands on the fort of Jinji, the Maratha king had escaped to the heights of safety. He hopelessly learnt that it was beyond the capacity of the Mughal hands to arrest him. So also it was beyond the power of the Mughal sword to kill him. Thus his dream of putting on anvil of salvation this very powerful source of energy to the Maratha nation, and the meanest of

infidels remained unfulfilled. What added insult to the injury was that the Maratha king had staged a come back in the Maharashtra. He had mustered unwanted courage in showing such an audacity to the Emperor of Hindustan.

Though worn out with the signs of age, yet he was not willing to accept this physical fact. At heart he always felt young and energetic. Therefore, much against the wish of many of his generals, nobles and followers he dicided to continue the war with the Marathas with greater enthusiasm than ever. Inspite of old age, he now took upon himself to lead the armies in the battle fields.

On the other hand though the Marathas suffered the loss of Jinji, they wisely changed their strategy. By now the Maratha leaders had well realised the incapacity of the Mughal forces to retaliate. The Mughal army in general had become weary and sick of wars in Maharashtra. For the past seventeen years since their stay in Maharashtra, they hardly had time to repose. The dissensions and personal rivalries among the Mughal generals were ever on increase. The commands given by Aurangzeb were hardly obeyed to their fullest extent by all and sundry. A large number of men had lost their lives in these battles. Much of the resources of the Mughal Empire had exhausted. The villages had become desolate and local inhabitants hardly owed their loyalty to the invading army. Those Maratha sardars who had joined the Mughals had in their minds the sole intention of serving the self interest alone. As long as it suited them, they sided with the Mughals. When the Mughal orders ran counter to their self interest, they, without any hesitation deserted the Mughal service. By now the Mughal army, exhausted and exhasperated, had grown quite thin. A large number of well known generals were slain in these battles. And yet the menance of the Marathas had not reduced a bit, thus the sole purpose of the sacrifice was being defeated. Battles fought in Karnataka and Jinji were no less a pointer in that direction.

And the Marathas were quick enough to grasp this situation. They looked back upon their past. They were convinced that they had effectively withstood such an onslaught. Though their losses both in manpower and material were by no means less, yet the determination to fight the aggression had not withered away. They did not become weary and sick of the war. They mustered more courage in order to continue the fight more vehimantly. By now they had gained sufficient confidence that no army of the Mughals howsoever large it might be could wipe them out. They were capable of facing the Mughal guns with all the confidence of a true soldier. This brought a total change in their outlook towards the present war. This gave them a new vision and vigour. They became highly inspired. From now onwards their role was changed. From defensive role they changed it to offensive one and planned a new strategy of war, a strategy which finally humbled the Mughal armies.

Early Period Of War In Maharashtra: (April 1689-March 1690)

Reverses For The Marathas

While adopting the policy of forming a 'Second Front' at Jinji, Rajaram entrusted the burden of administration of Maharashtra to Ramchandrapant and Shankaraji Nayaran, the most able statesmen. After reaching Jinji Rajaram conferred upon them the titles of Amatya and Sachiv respectively. Ramchandrapant and Shankarajipant the two loyal servants of the kingdom were brilliant in wit and speech, relentless in their work, their sole point of interest being the survival of Maharashtra against the invasion of the Mughals and the preservance of their own religion in the broadest sense, termed newly as Maharashtra dharma against the Mughal aggression.

Within a short period after reaching Jinji, Rajaram by an order made two divisions of Maharashtra. The southern part beginning from Karad, Talkonkan and Gokarna was put under Ramchandrapant. The northern part of Varghat

beginning from Karad and northern part of Northern Konkan was placed under Shankarajipant. [126] Later on the territory of Maval was also added to the latter's jurisdiction. Similarly, the army was also divided among the two generals, viz. Santaji Ghorpade and Dhanaji Jadhav. They were to function under the command of Ramchandrapant and Shankarajipant respectively.

Thus a strong nucleus of a Maratha Government continued to exist in the land of Maharashtra proper. This government had many important problems on hand which demanded immediate attention. The condition of the people had deteriorated to an alarming extent. Almost every face they saw wore a look of despair, almost every mile they travelled was littered with the wreckage left by the invading army. Burning and looting of the villages had assumed undue proportions. Once prosperous habitations gave place to dogs and desolution. Farms were without cultivation or tools, ploughs and seeds. Men were in desolute condition. The treasury was bankrupt. It was to be replenished. The army was in a desparate state. It was to be organised and equipped. The forts only a few of which were under their possessions, were to be adequately provisioned.

Politically speaking, the entire Konkan was under the possession of Ma'tbar Khan, the Mughal sardar. He was an unrivalled master of almost over fifty forts in that territory.

The Mughals were carrying out ravages on a very large scale in the rest of the country. The Mughal armies were moving about in all parts of Maharashtra, almost unhindered. All this was to be stopped.

Such was the magnitude of the problems, when the Government or the 'War council' was appointed. But they worked hard. They were pressed in whirlwind of urgency. Their sole goal was to drive out the invaders. For the accomplishment of that purpose they were ready to make any conceivable sacrifice. In that accomplishment was to consist all their glory. No fascination of an 'inam land' or a

'royal mansab' in the Mughal service could divert them from their singular aim. They appeared to be possessing bodies incapable of fatigue, and minds, whose energies were never exhausted. They worked in unanimity with others. They consecrated themselves to this great enterprise by day and by night and with an untiring energy which bewildered their contemporaries in the enemy camp.

Their problems were manifold. Yet first and foremost was 'how to stop the widely spreading Mughal army?'. They certainly knew that even if they had attacked the Mughal army in open, still then the Mughal army at no stage could have been crippled with any significant losses either in man power or equipment. The Mughals were still capable of coming within a hair's breadth of imposing the will of their dictator on the final day of decision.

Therefore, it was essential for the 'War Council' to work out a war strategy. The principle of this strategy was to give maximum blows with minimum force. This was to be implemented by recapturing the forts one by one from the enemy mostly by surprise and night attacks. In other words, they were to follow an offensive warfare though not in open battlefields. The forts were to form the nucleus of warfare. Therefore assault and capture of the forts were considered the ultimate key to the victory, and this was the only means whereby the Marathas might have hoped to challenge the Mughal power so firmly rooted in the Deccan.

From the activities of the next few years, it is evident that the 'War Council' worked hard. The country was gradually geared up to offensive warfare shedding aside its defensive role.

The Marathas were facing their strongest enemy in Aurangzeb who had vast experience of the war theatre of the Deccan coupled with intimate knowledge of the Deccan. plateau. He had immense resources of wealth and manpower at his disposal. He paid personal attention in forming the war strategy of the Deccan. He had perceived that the

strength of the Marathas lay in their forts. He thought that if all the forts in the Deccan were captured, the Marathas would be automatically forced to surrender. And he could then establish the Mughal rule in the entire Deccan. In order to achieve this aim, he spared no pains and made use of all conceivable means. His approach to the problem was in three different stages. Firstly he would make use of force to capture a particular fort, if failed in the attempt, then coerce people in the vicinity and if both these means failed, then he would resort to bribing the qil'edar, which brought him assuredly successful results.

Till the end of May 1689 the Mughals had already under their command in the extreme north, fort of Salher (21st February 1687), Trimbak (8th January 1689), in the centre Sinhgadh (November 1684) and Rajgadh (May, 1689). In the north Konkan, Ma'tabar Khan had captured over fifty forts in that region. Vishalgadh, Satara and Panhala were the only three important forts which were still under the Marathas.

On 2nd April 1689, Aurangzeb who was at Koregaon, intended to visit the fort of Islamabad [127] (Chakan). But prior to his departure, the three Ghorpades, Santaji, Bahirji and Maloji along with Vithoji Chavan who were matchless in their courage and dare devil acts attacked Aurangzeb's camp at night. It is reported that they carried away the gold pinacles of Aurangzeb's tents and presented to Rajaram who was then at Vishalgadh. [128] This action created a great scare and bewilderment in Aurangzeb's camp.

The bald fact that within a period of two and half months since the humiliation and death of Sambhaji, the Maratha army had been able to strike back, even on so small a scale, gave courage and hope to not a few. The cheers which greeted the Ghorpade brothers echoed round the mountains and valleys of Sahyadri. The morale of the Maratha people which was at its lowest ebb, was recovering fast. Rajaram rightly honoured them by giving the titles of Mamlakat-madar, Amir-ul-Umrao and Hindu Rao, to Santaji, Maloji

and Bahirji respectively. Vithoji Chavan was given the title of Himat Bahadur.

In June 1689, Aurangzeb proposed to return to the North during forthcoming February-March 1690. The officers at Shahajahanabad were ordered to keep the palaces and gardens clean. One thousand camels were ordered from Ahmadabad and Burhanpur. [129] But from subsequent events it is noticed that Aurangzeb changed his mind, and the reasons for this eventual change are not known.

By the end of June,the Khem Sawant of Sawantwadi and the Desai of Kudal, became disloyal to the Marathas. The former informed Aurangzeb that he would help Mughal armies in that territory by way of supply of food grains and establishing thanas. He also promised to open the road to Goa. [130]

During May-June (1689), the Mughals had laid siege to Prachandgadh. Early June, Moropant attacked the besieging army. He was accompanied by Baji Sarjerao Jedhe Deshmukh. They raised the siege and thus defeated the Mughals. [131]

In the month of June, Abul Khair Khan son of Abdul Aziz Khan was appointed Subahdar of Rajgadh and Mubarak-ullah son of Iradat Khan was appointed Faujdar of Islamabad (Chakan). [132]

On July 10th Ruhullah Khan was sent to capture the fort of Raichur. [133] By 12th July, the Algonda Desai of Hukeri was asked to hand over Vallabhgadh vacated by its qil'edar to Shaikh Abul Ali the Mughal representative and keep his armed contingent. [134] While in Talkonkan, about one thousand nine hundred men of Abdur Razak the Mughal thanedar of Talkonkan deserted him. [135] A Maratha force appeared in the vicinity of Kholapur in Khandesh. Munnawar Khan, son of Khan-i-Zaman Fatah Jang went out to chastise them. [136] On 17th July the fort of Prabal was captured by Ma'tabar Khan.

Simultaneously Mahuli was taken by the Mughals by use of bribes. [137] On 27th July,Muhammad Ali was appointed faujdar of Dindori. By the end of July prince Muhammad Bidar Bakht attacked the gadhi of Sansani. The surrounding territory was ravaged and burnt. A tower of the gadhi which was blown up by mines fell on the prince's army. About four hundred men died. [138]

Rasalgadh near Rahiri [139] was captured and Aurangzeb was presented with gold key on 1st August. On 28th August Hatim Khan was appointed qil'edar of Chandangadh.

On September 22, Kan Sawant and Manp Sawant were ordered to stop all foodgrains being taken away by the Marathas from that territory. They were also given the task of destroying the thanas of the Marathas and capture their forts. On 20th October, I'tqad Khan captured Raigadh. Royal personages of the Marathas who were in the palace were arrested. The Khan was rewarded with the title of Zulfiqar Khan Bahadur. [140]

20. Panhalgadh captured by the Mughals

Since the death of Sambhaji, the Mughal armies were chasing Rajaram, the Maratha king. He was moving from one fort to another. In the month of September 1689, he left Pratapgadh and arrived at Panhala. Aurangzeb after having learnt about it, ordered Shaikh Nizam the captor of Sambhaji to invest the fort. The Maratha qil'edar, Piraji Ghatge Kagalkar, had a fairly strong garrison, therefore it was not an easy task for the Mughal forces to capture the fort. Added to it, Ramchandrapant ordered, Santaji and Dhanaji, the two army commanders to march in that region and harry the Mughal troops engaged in besieging the fort. Thus the Mughal operations were delayed. As a result of it, Aurangzeb ordered Ruhullah Khan, the Bakhshi of the Mughal army to explore the possibilities, if the fort could be taken by use of bribes. The Maratha qil'edar firmly refused the offer and sought an additional help from Rajaram and Santaji to protect the fort. But Santaji was not able to send

the much needed help in time. The condition of the Maratha garrison had become worse. And at the same time the news of fall of Raigadh to the Mughals, reached the fort. It had a very adverse effect on the morale of the garrison and finally the Maratha qil'edar was forced to surrender the fort. [141] Thus by December 1689, the Marathas lost Panhalgadh one of their valuable fort, which had a lot of strategic importance.

In November, Bahramand Khan attacked the fortress of Ashta. A battle took place. Many Marathas were killed. Fakhr-ud-din Khan, Bakhshi of Bahramand Khan's army and many others from the Mughal side were also killed. The Mughals secured the fortress. [142]

On 29th November, Ruhullah Khan captured the fort of Raichur and named it as Firuznagar. [143] On 18th December Aurangzeb left Koregaon for Bijapur and arrived there on 11th January of the following year. On 12th March 1690, Fath Jang Khan informed Aurangzeb that Shivaji's forts situated in the sea could be captured by blockading the supplies, which reached the forts through the European traders. [144] And further, the guards of the forts could be persuaded to give up the resistance.

In February, a Maratha force under Dhanaji and Hardya(?) was going to Balaghat by way of Parenda. Lutufullah Khan gave fight to them near Vangi. Many men were killed on either side. Iftkhar Khan reached there to the rescue of Lutufullah Khan. [145] Aurangzeb got displeased and recalled the Khan.

Within one year's period since the death of Sambhaji, the Mughals gained control over fifty forts in the Konkan region. In the extreme north the forts of Salher, Trimbak and Mahuli were captured. In the Poona Kolhapur region, they conquered Sinhgadh, Rajgadh, Raigadh, Rasalgadh (a small fortress near Rahiri) and the fort of Chandan. Thus the Mughals managed to penetrate and conquer many of the

hilly forts in the Sahyadri range with utmost ease. By now they had established complete control over the entire Konkan region. At the same time, Aurangzeb gained new allies in the form of Sawants and Dalvis from Sawantwadi and Kudal respectively. They were given the task of keeping the Mughal line of communication safe and secure upto Goa from the attacks of the Marathas. Further, they were ordered to stop the supply of food grains reaching Maharashtra from that region. Similar precaution was taken to prohibit all supplies coming through the sea route to the Maratha land. Thus Rajaram the new king of the Marathas was left with but a few forts like Vishalgadh and Satara. Similarly the boundaries of the Maratha state were reduced considerably. They suffered heavy losses in manpower and territory. The reverses of their armed forces were disturbing. The Mughals had spread their network everywhere. The only favourable event of the period, from the point of view of the Marathas was, Rajaram's safe march to Jinji. Otherwise the Mughal infestation in the land of the Marathas was so deep that the Marathas could hardly match them in any theatre of war during this short period.

21. The Mughal-Maratha Armed Clash In Satara And Ahmadnagar Region (April 1690-September 1691)

During April-May 1690, the Marathas recovered the forts of Wai, Pratapgadh, Torna and Rohida through the exertions of Ramchandrapant and Shankarajipant. [146] Ramchandrapant sent a word of caution to the Deshmukhs of Gunjanmaval and Marne villages to remain alert, to raise new troops, to destroy the enemy posts and thus help the war effort. [147]

Rajaram, the king of the Marathas, amdist chaos and turmoil, devoted some energy in uniting the class of Maratha nobility and the people in general to fight the invading Mughal armies. In a letter written to Babaji Sarjarao Jedhe Deshmukh (3rd March, 1690), he emphatically made it known 'this is Maharashtra Rajya, and you must strive hard

for its defence.' The Deshmukh was asked to be vigilant and in readiness with his armed contingent. 'What is the strength of the enemy?' questioned Rajaram in the same letter and stated that 'Once you people have resolved to fight, then the enemy would be nowhere. You are striving hard for this kingdom, then you should not worry about Aurangzeb'. [148] Thus Rajaram, made it clear in most unequivocal terms that it was a people's war and people were expected to join it, and fight the aggression fearlessly. The Marathas planned to regain the lost territory and the forts from the Mughals, besides what they had already conquered.

In July 1690 the Marathas captured Rajgadh from the Mughals. Abul Khair Khan, the qil'edar of Rajgadh after seeing a very large force of the Marathas in the vicinity of the fort, peacefully vacated the same. His bag and baggage was looted by the Marathas. [149] He reached the camp of Firuz Jang in a most helpless condition.

In July again, the Marathas had another victory to their credit. Baji Sarjarao Jedhe Deshmukh recovered Vichitragadh from the Mughals. [150]

22. Rustum Khan captured by the Marathas

On the Mughal side they planned a campaign against the fort of Satara, which was under the Marathas. Sharza Khan, the Mughal general, who was lately given the title of Rustum Khan, and who was well acquainted with the topography of the Satara region, was ordered to lay siege to the fort. But Sharza Khan was surprised by an attack from the troops led by veterans like Santaji and Dhanaji. Ghalib, son of Sharza Khan marched against the Marathas, with the advance party. In a close battle, the Karnataki musketeers, in the Maratha army charged the Mughal lines with deadly accuracy. Their elephants were wounded, and they started trampling their own men. Sharza Khan, seeing the miserable plight of his son, rushed for his son's rescue. He fought bravely and gathered again all the runaway men and started chasing the Maratha generals Santaji and Dhanaji, 'These two,

following the usual Maratha tactices, pretended to give way and the Khan pressed impetuously on, driving his own elephant onwards accompanied by a few troopers. Just then the skirt of his dress was set ablaze by the enemy's fire. The Berad musketeers took advantage of the confusion by falling upon the imperialists baggage and rear guard and plundering them. The troops were distracted and they dispersed abandoning the fight. [151]

Rustum Khan was captured. His son Ghalib was wounded and also captured. The Mughal lossess were heavy. The death toll amounted to one thousand five hundred. The Maratha troops from the fort of Satara were keeping a close watch on it and rushed immediately, as soon as Rustum Khan and his son Ghalib were captured, 'they attacked the Mughal siege line and took in captivity the wife and mother of Rustum Khan. They also recovered four thousand horses, eight elephants in addition to the bag and baggage of the Mughal soldiers.

After sixteen days,Rustum Khan promised to pay one lac of rupees as ransom to the Marathas and kept his mother in the Maratha camp as surity for the same. His two wives and sons managed to escape the Maratha captivity and reached Kasegaon near Karad.

The Maratha leaders were quite jubilant for hooking a big 'catch' and thus firmly delivering a strong blow to the power and prestige of the Mughals.

Thus the Marathas were able to ascertain their position in Satara Kolhapur region. The two Maratha generals deserved all the praise from their king Rajaram.

Aurangzeb on receiving the intelligence of Sharza Khan's miserable plight sent reinforcement under Firuz Jang. Sidi 'Abul Qadir, while on his way to join the Mughal force was attacked by Rupaji Bhosale. He was injured, fifty men lost their lives and complete equipment. [152]

Aurangzeb by now was much worried about North Satara, particularly, the defeat of Sharza Khan, meant the loss of

Mughal control over Satara territory. So, he ordered Lutufullah Khan to proceed to Khatav (30th May). [153] He was also instructed to establish the Mughal posts in that territory. He reached Khatav on 6th July. As he was settling down, his men were busy pitching the tents and had thought of taking some rest, Santaji along with ten thousand men fell upon them. The rain was incessent. The Mughals were taken by total surprise. Lutufullah's son hastened to encounter the enemy and saved the camp from the plunder. Shortly he was reinforced by his father's troops. Santaji moved towards Wardhangadh. There were heavy losses on both the sides. The Marathas lost 500 in slain, besides losing 300 mares, 400 spears, 200 muskets and kettledrums. Comparatively the Mughal losses were less. As reported in Akhbarat, they lost sixty seven persons and one hundred and seventy were wounded.

According to the author of Inshai Madhoram, 'But the Marathas were only baffled and not crushed. They rallied their forces and reappeared in the East Satara region in force. Lutufullah urged by the Emperor, hastened to the scene. He halted at night in the village Piliv (12 m.e. of Mhasvad, and 15 m.e. of Akluj). Next morning a Maratha army reputed to be 20,000 cavalry and unnumbered infantry, led by Santa, Dhana, Dafle, More and other generals enveloped the small imperial detachment on its march. Lutufullah placing his baggage in the centre, faced on all sides and engaged the enemy. Dafle had 10,000 Karnataki foot musketeers, whose fire severely galled the Mughals. The battle raged from dawn to sunset, the imperialists beating back repeated attacks of the enemy. Finally, Santa and Dhana at the head of 5000 picked horsemen, charged the division of Lutufullah himself, but were repulsed. At sunset the Marathas withdrew, leaving a thousand dead on the field, besides many wounded. The Mughals lost 200 killed and above 300 wounded.' [154]

The Marathas were repulsed in the Satara region but were not totally routed. Shortly, Shankarajipant emphasised his

authority and started collecting the revenue from that region. He warned the Deshmukhs and Deshpandes in Khatav and around, that they must pay revenue only to the Marathas and none else. The other Maratha leaders were encouraged to recapture the lost territory.

Sometime before the third week of July, Kanhoji Zunzarao, the Deshmukh of Kanad Khore captured Prachandgadh and defeated a large battalion of the Mughals. Ramchandrapant, appreciating the success, entrusted him with the task of capturing Rajgadh and Sinhgadh. [155]

In the month of September, the Marathas turned their attention to Ahmadnagar region.

In the first week of September,Maloji with one thousand cavalry of the Marathas alighted in Gazi-ud-din Khan's pargana (Parner). They ravaged the territory. Sayyid Hussain Ali Khan was ordered to chastise them. [156] Another force appeared in the vicinity of Bahadurgadh (Pedgaon) and Ahmadnagar. Yakkataz Khan was ordered by Bahramand Khan to remain alert in the vicinity of Ahmadnagar. [157]

By about the middle of September 1691 Ramchand and son's of Raghoji from prince Muhammad Aazam's army who were at Khatav were attacked by the Marathas. A battle took place. [158] In the third week of September,a Maratha force appeared near Koregaon. Ali-ul-Rutb Khan, the Mughal commander gave a fight to it. Many men were killed and wounded. [159] At the same time another Maratha force arrived in the vicinity of Shah durg (Nabi Shah durg Panhala). They killed the Mughal officer guarding the place. Chatrasal's son who was present on the spot could not effectively check the Marathas. [160]

On 24th September 1691, Santaji dashed near a village called Nandaj, in Ahmadnagar and attacked the village. He was accompanied by three thousand cavalry and two thousand infantry. The Kotwal of the place gave a fight. But

he was defeated. A certain Gopal Gumasta of the village acted as an informant. Consequent upon this the villagers paid chauth to the Marathas amounting to five thousand five hundred rupees. They also carried away all the camels from the fortress. [161]

23. The Mughal-Maratha military activities (October 1691-February 1692)

From October till February next year (1692) there were very few movements of the Marathas in Maharashtra, fewer still were those of the Mughal troops.

During September-October 1691 Rajaram entrusted the task of recovering the territory in Maval, Purandhar and Junnar area to Sarjarao Jedhe Deshmukh of Rohidkhore. Santaji was asked to give him adequate help for accomplishment of this task. [162]

On 5th October prince Muhammad Aazam marched towards Bahadurgadh in order to chastise the Marathas. Later on he received the intelligence of Santaji being in Satara, then he dashed towards Satara. [163] Tahaur Khan was ordered to chastise [164] the Maratha force which had appeared near Galgale.

A Maratha force arrived at Chokhandi and besieged the fortress (12th October). The Mughal thanedar Sayyid Muhammad gave a fight. But the Marathas out numbered the Mughal thanedar took him captive and kept him in the fortress. [165] Simultaneously, a Maratha force besieged Parasgadh. The Mughal qil'edar Afrasiyab gave a battle but he was defeated and taken away as a captive. [166] Another Maratha force under Shankaraji Pant arrived near Murtijanagar. Fidaullah the Mughal faujdar sent his son Shuja Allah to oppose him.

By middle of October a Maratha force under the command of Keso (Lakho) arrived near Parenda. Hamid-ud-din Khan gave a battle. [167] But his condition became helpless and Sazawar Khan was ordered to hasten for his help.

On 16th December, three thousand Marathas attacked Khanazad Khan and Daud Khan's men. From there they launched an attack on Ruhullah Khan's army. A battle took place. Many men were killed on either side. Marathas lost Krishnaji and Ala-ud-din. [168] At the same time the Marathas were active near Khatav and Hamid-ud-din Khan was sent from Parenda to Khatav. [169]

Sometime after February 1692, Ramchandrapant sent some troopers along with Parshurampant and recaptured Panhala fort from the Mughals. [170] This was a big set back to the Mughals. During this period Aurangzeb's camp was at Galgala. On 8th May he sent Muizz-ud-din towards Akluj and on 9th May, he appointed Abdur Razaq Khan Lari as faujdar of Rahiri and Konkan. He was also made a four hazari mansabdar. [171]

During May, Rajaram issued orders to capture Raigadh from the Mughals. Abaji Sondev, Jaulkar, Darekar, Kasurde, Gole and other mavale persons were sent to carry out the military operations. [172]

However, the Mughals managed to create a clevage in the Maratha nobility loyal to Rajaram and in November-December Sarjarao Jedhe joined the Mughal service. He was granted the Deshmukhi of Bhor in Maval territory. [173]

In a period of two years, since March 1690, the Marathas harryed the Mughals everywhere. In fact they intensified their activities. The problem of the Marathas had become a nightmare to the Mughal Emperor. They gave formidable resistance. A contemporary report describing the same says 'Aurangzeb was worried day and night about the enemy (Marathas) in the Deccan. Much of the territory has been brought under the imperial rule. But the army has become so weak that now there was no more strength left in it. The services and tasks which mansabdars of 7500 (sawar) could have performed, in their places the Emperor had to send princes as faujdars. They are making wild chase and their task is not nearing completion. The Emperor is receiving the

news of battles (with the Marathas) from everywhere. He is not finding proper remedy for it.' [174]

24. Unity Efforts by Rajaram

Since the time Rajaram took over the reigns of the Maratha kingdom i.e. 1689 till 1692, the Maratha forces were opposing the Mughal troops in all possible theatres of war. In fact, the resistance was more than formidable. But the characteristic of this opposition was, a bit different. It lacked the unity of action. It lacked the guidance of central command. The actions appeared more sporadic, than planned, more disjointed than coherent. There were armed oppositions in the Western Maharashtra, in the South and North Konkan, in Marathwada region, in Ahmadnagar and Nasik region. This had continued since Sambhaji's time. People in general believed that they had to oppose the Mughal forces occupying their home land.

Rajaram after having grasped the situation devoted his energies, in uniting the people, giving it a sense of purpose and unity of action. This became a matter of urgency as lately, one of the trusted lieutenant and noble of the Marathas, Sarjarao, had joined the Mughal service. The repetition of this incident as far as possible, was to be avoided. The two ministers of Rajaram viz. Ramchandrapant and Shankarajipant, devoted more time in uniting the people, who were operating independently of each others. Their's was an uphill task.

They had no attractive terms to offer, yet they could appeal emphatically to their sense of patriotism. But then this alone however well-meant it might have been it could not create the desired effect. Therefore it was thought appropriately to appeal to the people to join the Maratha forces and promise them land or new territory as a reward. This is how the idea of giving 'Inam lands and vatans' took roots. An idea which was essentially opposed to Shivaji's own thinking in the past. But then under the circumstances, Rajaram and his Councillors did not have much option either. What they did in practice was that the territory

promised to these patriot warriors was the one that they were expected to recover from the Mughal clutches, restore it to normalcy, raise new troops and be in readiness to accept new assignments, then and then alone they were entitled to claim that 'inam', land or ' vatan'. It was essentially a free gift (the revenue of it) to them for the services rendered. Thus Rajaram, the king and his councillors, ensured two fold objective, firstly, an oath of loyalty to the cause of Swaraj and the kingdom and secondly enlistment of fresh troops, under their own arrangements for taking up new tasks.

This in turn had its own effect. The people in general and the local leaders at village level in particular took up initiative in the matter. This brought a great deal of confidence among them. The leadership was decentralised. They obeyed the commands of Ramchandrapant and Shankaraji Narayan who were at the helm of the affairs. The people became more alert and active and enlisted their support to the Maratha king and the government.

This had one more unique advantage. The merit and the loyalty became distinctly recognized, which was a dire necessity of the hour. The task was lying open in front of the people and in Napoleonic term it became 'a career open for talent'.

There were very many influential Maratha sardars, serving under the Mughals. It was essential to bring them back under the Maratha banner. Ramchandrapant and Shankarjipant on the advice of Rajaram devoted vigorously to this task. This was the task, the importance and magnitude of which could by no means have been under-rated.

During 1691, Nagoji Rataji Mane who was serving under the Mughals deserted them and joined Rajaram at Jinji. There he expressed his loyalty to the Maratha king. Rajaram gave him an assurance saying, 'The kingdom of the Chhatrapati is the kingdom of Gods .... The Maharashtra Dharma should last long.' Nagoji in turn, agreed to fight for the king. He was given kasba Mhasvad and twelve hamlets as 'Vatan of Sardeshmukhi. (12 April, 1691).' [175]

During May-June 1692 Nagoji Mane represented to Rajaram about Hanmantrao and Krishnaji Ghorpade, who were then in the Mughal service. On 4th June,Rajaram wrote to Hanmantrao Ghorpade saying that 'Your intentions and heartfelt desire of protecting 'Maharashtra Dharma' have become quite manifest.' Knowing the capabilities of these two brave persons Rajaram allotted to them an amount of six lakh hons and new cavalry. He further assured, that they would get half the share in the spoils that they might in the course of their actions acquire from the enemy, including horses, elephants, and cash etc. Further they were also required to undertake the following campaigns, and if successful they would also get an additional reward as indicated against each task.

Hanmantrao Ghorpade was entitled to receive, 62,500 hons after the capture of Raigadh, 62,500 hons after the capture of Bijapur, 62,500 hons after the capture of Bhaganagar, 62,500 hons after the capture of Aurangabad, and 2,50,000 hons after the capture of Delhi. Similarly, Krishnaji Ghorpade was entitled to receive 12,500 hons after the conquest of Raigadh territory, 12,500 hons after the conquest of Bijapur, 12,500 hons after the conquest of Bhaganagar, 12,500 hons after the conquest of Aurangabad and 50,000 hons after the conquest of Delhi. [176]

It only shows the undaunted courage the Maratha king and the Ghorpades possessed. In the hour of defeat the mind of the Maratha king soothed with schemes for victory and the conquest not only of his own forts and territory, but the citadel of the Mughal Emperor, the capital of the Mughal empire, the city of Delhi. This mighty and ambitious scheme, showed to the world, that with methods of offence and the means, whereby this small and battered David of a country might hurl its stone against the fabulous Goliath of Mughal military might.

In August, Rajaram granted a sanad to the Deshmukhs and Desh-Kulkarnis of Muthekhore, as well as to the

Deshkulkarni, Gaokulkarni and Chaugule of taluqa Gunjanmaval for their loyalty and integrity to the king. They were asked to obey the orders of Ramchandrapant and Shankarajipant and thus help the cause of the Chhatrapati (the Maratha King). [177]

Prior to September 1691, Haibatrao Silimkar and Prayagji. Dinkarrao Hatnolikar, two influential Maratha sardars had become disloyal. Shankarajipant promptly imprisoned them and imposed a fine of forty thousand rupees on the latter. But Jedhe Deshmukh negotiated about them and thus secured their release. These men, later on were asked to serve the kingdom loyally. [178] Thus Rajaram gradually won over the people, who had openly become disloyal to him.

Similarly, Rajaram won over the Berad and Koli tribes of Maharashtra. He granted them the necessary protection and thus entrusted them with the task of capture of the fort of Purandar. [179] During November, the Deshmukh of Dicholi was induced to join the Marathas. He was granted the vatan of that territory, for remaining loyal, while his two brothers deserted the Marathas and joined the Mughals. [180]

In 1692, Antaji Udhav, an influential Maratha leader was won over by Rajaram. He was given assurance of protection and was asked to join Ramchandrapant, with his armed contingent. [181]

Similar efforts were made to reconcile the son of Nagoji Mane. There was some misunderstanding between Santaji and Nagoji's son, Subhanji. Rajaram who rightly estimated the value of having worthy men to his side, wrote to Ramchandrapant that 'Subhanji Mane is a well-known person and has got large following and should be given a respectable place and rank.' The Maratha general Santaji was reprimanded for his behaviour with Subhanji. [182]

25. Capture of Panhalgadh :
A Guardian knot for the Mughals

Sometime, after February 1692, the Marathas had raised their banner high over the fort of Panhala. For a period of

six months, i.e., till October, the Mughals silently watched it. During October, prince Mu'iz-ud-din, who was away at Akluj was ordered to lay siege and capture the fort of Panhala. Prince Mu'iz-ud-din arrived in the vicinity of Panhala and laid siege to the two gates of the fort, with the help of Iftikhar Khan. He blockaded the supply of food grain going into the fort. Lutufullah Khan and Asalat Khan who were ordered to go to Ahmadnagar on 24th October were recalled and were ordered to go to the help of Mu'iz-ud-din. By the middle of October they joined the prince and worked with him and supervised the siege work.

Simultaneously, Mu'iz-ud-din established firm communication between Panhala, Miraj and Galgale, where Aurangzeb had encamped. 'Gradually the investment was tightened. Mines were taken to the walls, Mughal outposts were set up around them and in January 1693 four large pieces of artillery were sent to the prince by the Emperor.'[183]

'But for a year the fort held out, and in October, 1693, the scene entirely changed. A vast Maratha army, (ten thousand horse and foot according to Akhbarat dt. 27 Oct.) under Dhana Jadhav, Ramchandra and Shankaraji arrived for its relief and encircled the small siege force. The battle began on 20th and there were daily encounters for some days. While this contest kept the besiegers engaged, the Marathas outside easily threw fresh troops and provisions into the fort, and in concert with the garrison raided the Mughal trenches with great success. Some guns and wheeled field-pieces (rahkala) were carried off from Saf Shikan Khan's position into the fort. Some imperial officers were slain, several others wounded, and one taken prisoner by the enemy.'

'Meantime, the Emperor had issued urgent orders to hurry up two heavy reinforcements to the prince under the command of Firuz Jang and Khanazad Khan. Khem Sawant was ordered to keep back from helping the Marathas. The Maratha relieving force heard of their coming (at the end of October) and dispersed from the neighbourhood of Panhala. Dhana made his way north towards Satara; but before

reaching that fort he was sighted by Firuz Jang's army on its southward march to the prince's side. The Khan sent his vanguard under his son Chin Qulich Khan and Rustam Khan, who overtook the Marathas near Karad (Velhe). A severe battle was fought. The Marathas were defeated and dispersed with heavy slaughter, leaving thirty prisoners and six hundred horses in the hands of the victors. The Mughals too lost many men.' [184]

'But Dhana Jadhav had effectively spoiled the work done by Mu'iz-ud-din in a year outside Panhala. The fort had been reprovisioned, the siege work had been destroyed and heavy losses inflicted on the Mughal army. Thereafter, though the prince continued there for four months longer, he could do nothing.'

On 26th April a Maratha force arrived near Panhala and was engaged in carrying grain and bulls. Prince Mu'iz-ud-din ordered Muhammad Askari, the Bakhshi of his army and Ali Murad along with their men to punish the Marathas. They marched about fourteen miles from Panhala and faced the Marathas. A battle took place and they recovered all the bulls. In the meantime three thousand cavalry of the Marathas arrived from Mahadev hills. Again a battle took place. Muhammad Askari, 'Ali Murad and others from the Mughal side deserted the battle field. About five hundred Mughal soldiers were killed.' [185]

On 27th April,Saf Shikan Khan an officer of the Mughal artillery,destroyed one tower of the fort by bombardment. [186]

On 1st May, a Maratha force brought food grains to the besieged. Prince Mu'iz-ud-din appointed one thousand men to chastise them. At this time, Hamid-ud-din Khan who was beyond the Krishna river was ordered to join the prince. [187] On 7th May, Hamid-ud-din Khan arrived at Kolhapur. On the way Mir Baqi, his Bakhshi was attacked and looted by the Marathas. [188]

Thus the siege of Panhala dragged on hopelessly. The Marathas were attacking and plundering the siege camp. To

all this was added the arrival of Santaji with a big army from Jinji. Aurangzeb got alarmed at it and reinforced prince Mu'iz-ud-din's army. He ordered Khanazad Khan, son of Ruhullah Khan, Gazi-ud-din Khan, Qasim Khan and Khan-i-Jahan Bahadur to proceed to Panhala.[189]

On 30th July 1693 Anwar Khan the Mughal thanedar of Kolhapur deserted his post just out of fright, as soon as he heard about the approaching Maratha force. In the first week of August the Marathas attacked the Mughals and carried away Hidayat-Ullah, Muhammad Zahir and Muhammad Momin. They demanded twenty thousand rupees for their release.[190]

'The siege was practically abandoned; the prince carried on his operations languidly, merely to deceive the Emperor, and opened negotiations with the garrison to secure the fort for a price. When four months had been thus wasted, Aurangzeb on 7th March 1694, ordered a force of six thousand men to strengthen the prince, as the siege had now come to a stop. At the same time Mu'iz-ud-din was authorised to use his discretion if the fort was surrendered peacefully he could grant terms, if not he must renew entrenching and lay siege to it a second time.'[191]

'But it was of no use. Already, about 8th March, the prince availing himself of the Emperor's permission, had begun to march away from Panhala, while Lutufullah Khan and many other officers, who had positive orders to stay below the fort, joined him in the retreat. The Emperor on hearing of this (13th March) sent an officer to turn the prince back from Vadgaon (14 m.n. of Panhala) and take him back to that fort to make a decision about it on the spot by either securing it for a price or renewing siege operations against it. Four days later the Emperor changed his mind and wrote to the prince to come to court, while his officers were to be forced to go back to Panhala under Lutfullah's command, to continue the siege. Mu'iz-ud-din was received in audience by his grand father on the 29th of the month. His cousin Bidar Bakht had been selected to undertake the task from

which he had returned unsuccessful. Bidar Bakht, with a nominal muster-roll of 25000 men and artillery, was given formal leave on 27th March and began his journey from the Court at Galgala on 5th April. 'The officers who had come with Muizz to Court without orders, were now driven by force back to Panhala.'

'But the Emperor seems to have changed his plan again, as we find Bidar Bakht campaigning with Bombay Kanara (Belgaon and Dharwar) during the second half of 1694 and his siege of Panhala began a year later in April 1695.'

'His first acts were marked by vigour. Opening his approaches and planning his artillery, he sieged the village at the foot of the hill and demolished one bastion of the fort. (Akhbarat 11 May 1695). But the promise of these opening operations was not fulfilled. A desolutory siege was continued by him till the end of January 1696, when the disasters to Qasim Khan and Himmat Khan further south induced the Emperor to send prince to Basavpatan,and to entrust the siege of Panhala to Firuz Jang, who too could effect nothing. In fact the capture of Panhala was quite beyond the power of any divisional army, as Aurangzeb was to realise during his own siege of it in 1701.' [192]

26. Years 1693 and 1694 await new tasks for the Marathas

By 1693 the Marathas had recovered beyond expectations of Aurangzeb. In 1689, they were considered to be crushed but by 1693, they had gradually but firmly raised their head in Maharashtra. The singular success the Maratha army, under Santaji and Dhanaji achieved at Jinji, enlivened the spirit of the Marathas in Maharashtra. The terror these two generals caused in the rank and file of the Mughal army at Jinji had greater impact on home land. The morale of the Marathas had been elevated considerably high. They regained the lost faith in the existence of their state and thus their activities were intensified with great confidence in all parts of Maharashtra.

The Marathas planned to use the tactics of harrying the Mughal troops, quite effectively with their small roving

bands. In their effort, the support came from the local population beyond expectations. These roving bands under the commands of different nobles, were quite acquainted with the topography of the land, and the various war theatres. They had mastered the intricate paths leading to Konkan, the Western ghats, the uplands and the dense jungles. The defence forces at various forts in the Konkan and uplands were well equipped and adequately provisioned to meet any emergency. Simultaneously certain bands were given the task of making surprise attacks on the Mughal coloumns. The Mughal soldiers found it extremely difficult to repulse these attacks and chase away the Maratha bands.

Rajaram made plans to capture the territory of Aurangabad, Nanded and the region stretching upto Berar and Khandesh. Nagoji Mane, a sardar of great military repute and ability was deputed to undertake this mission. He had suffered great hardships for the defence of the Chhatrapati and the Maratha land in the past. 'He is a man of great ability' wrote Rajaram to Ramchandrapant, 'if he is given independent mission he could achieve great success.' (9th and 28th March 1693). Ramchandrapant duly conveyed the desire of their king to Nagoji Mane. The newly acquired territory was to be administered by Nagoji.[193]

Further he was also expected to collect more revenue and raise new troops and strengthen the cause of Swaraj. Ramchandrapant and Shankarjipant were asked to accord necessary help, for successful completion of the mission. Nagoji was given twelve villages in inam, along with Sardeshmukhi rights. In recognition of his excellent services rendered during the defence of Jinji, he received Sardeshmukhi of Parenda(22nd May, 1693).[194]

In the third week of March 1693, a Maratha force arrived near Mandrup in Sholapur district. They played havoc. Bahramand Khan's son Hasan 'Ali with a strong force was ordered to quell the Marathas.[195] They were frequently moving near about Degaon. The Mughal qil'edar complained to prince Mu'iz-ud-din about his small force.

But nothing seems to have been done.[196] By middle of April the Marathas had gathered near Mahadev hill. The Mughals at Panhala feared an attack from the Marathas. The Mughal commander Marhmat Khan from prince Mu'iz-ud-din's army asked for seven thousand cavalrymen. Hamid-ud-din Khan was ordered to proceed and also son of Subahdar of Nanded was asked to despatch his army along with Hamid-ud-din Khan.[197] But the fear of the Mughals proved to be baseless as the Maratha force consisting of nearly one thousand cavalry and foot soldiers reached in the vicinity of Beed from Mahadev hills. Atish Khan, the Mughal faujdar of the place was ordered to drive them away.[198] At the same time Hamid-ud-din Khan was asked to chastise the Marathas near Miraj.[199]

By about 27th April the Marathas carried away cattles and bulls from the Mughal army at Talhangi.[200]

27. Maratha attempts to capture Raigadh and Sinhgadh

Shankaraji Narayan, planned to recapture Raigadh, the capital of the Marathas. He ordered Trimbakpant Mutaliq and Vithoji Kakade, along with their contingent to capture the fort. They marched upto Rajmachi of the fort. But the force was repulsed due to the vigilance of the Mughal qil'edar.

Similar orders were issued to Navaji Balkavade to capture Sinhgadh.

This was a more dangerous and risky task, as an attempt in the previous year had failed and the Mughals were on the alert. But Navaji bravely accepted the challenge. He marched with his men, descended the ghat and reached near Sinhgadh. After having selected his comrades in arms, Navaji tried to scale the fort, himself being in the lead. The Mughals on the fort were quite alert. In the early hours of dawn Vithoji managed to place the ladders near the steps of the fort. Navaji, with all his courage and determination climbed up the ladders, along with his men. A fierce fighting took place. The garrison was defeated and thus the fort was captured on 1st July 1693.[201]

But the success was short lived. In October, the Marathas lost Sinhagadh to the Mughal general Ma'tabar Khan. Though Matabar Khan tried to take the fort by giving imperial assurance to the qil'edar, yet, his attempts did not succeed. Finally on 20th October, with the help of Mavale people, the fort was gained by escalade.

Immediately, Shankaraji Narayan sent a reinforcement for the rescue of the Maratha qil'edar. Khandoji Kadam and Damaji Narayan caused the blockade of the Mughals in the fort. Neither the supplies nor any communication reached the besieged. But this situation did not last long. Shortly, Ma'tabar Khan, sent an armed contingent under Kakaji and Rawat Mal Jhala, who defeated the Marathas in the region. Thus for next few years the Mughals retained Sinhgadh.

In August-September Khan-i-Jahan Bahadur's son Himmat Khan was sent to Bhalwani. From there he was asked to go to Kasegaon, Akluj, etc. and remain alert.[202] In the first week of September, Ramaji and other Marathas were active near pargana Nevase. The Mughal qil'edar and faujdar Abdul Ghafur gave a fight. A battle of arrows and musket shots took place. Ramaji was wounded and another sardar Narsingrao was taken captive.[203]

From October 1693 till July 1694, there do not appear to be any military activities, either from the Mughal side or the Marathas, excepting, in March, when Shankaraji Narayan, sent an armed contingent in the Pen territory and surprised the Mughal representative Shivaji Telangrao. Though Ma'tabar Khan had posted a strong force of four hundred men in the region, yet, the Marathas over powered them and brought Pen and the surrounding region under the Marathas (29th March 1694).[204]

28. Capture of Korigadh by the Mughals

In August 1694 Rajaram ordered Mudhoji Naik Nimbalkar to join Dhanaji and Santaji in Satara and Phaltan territory as the Mughals had become immensely strong there. He along with his armed contingent was specially ordered to work under Dhanaji Jadhav. Amrit Rao

Nimbalkar was also asked to join them. [205] Dhanaji and Santaji with their armies arrived near Warugadh (2nd August 1694, 25 m.e. of Satara). From there they laid siege to Mahipatgadh (10 m.e. of Warugadh) and carried out the blockade.

In September the Mughals made a successful attempt in gaining the fort Kori. Trimbakpant Mutalik, Yadav Samraj and Mahadaji Baji were on the fort. Rayaji Bahulkar, who was the qil'edar was approached by the Mughals. [206] He accepted large amount of bribe and agreed to hand over the fort. The Mughal contingent sometime after 15th September reached the fort, and with the use of rope-laders scaled the fort. The Maratha garrison which was not at all aware of the qil'edar Rayaji Bahulkar's doings, defended the fort.

A gallant Maratha, Navaji Balkavade with his comrades in arms hoovered over the fort. He did not allow the enemy to carry any ammunition towards the fort. Mansur Khan's son bringing reinforcement from Junnar was intercepted by the Marathas. He had supplies, cavalry and guns with him but, Balkavade attacked him near Paud, defeated him and captured his horses. [207] He showed great bravery and courage.

On the Maratha side, Abajipant Sabnis, Girjoji Nimbalkar, Dinkarrao and many other soldiers were killed. Trimbakpant and Moro Narayan were captured by the Mughals. But Yadav Samraj and Mahadaji Baji, with their families escaped through the western ghats towards Bhor. Thus the Mughals occupied Korigadh. [208]

29. Korigadh recaptured by the Marathas

The loss of Korigadh was taken quite seriously by Shankaraji Narayan. He was not prepared to let go the traitor, Rayaji Bahulkar lightly. In November while at Rajgadh he got the news of the capture of Korigadh. Immediately, he sent Pantaji Sivdev, Chapji (Chapaji?) Kadam of Bhor, Damaji Narayan and many other soldiers to besiege Korigadh. They besieged the fort and blockaded it.

The Mughals were harrassed. Navaji Balkavade attacked the Sidis force at Kurdu Ghat who had come to Korigadh, to help the Mughals and stopped any reinforcement going to the fort. Finally the Marathas gave an assurance to Doge, the representative of the Mughals and incharge of the fort that he would be let out free. His men vacated the fort without any resistence. Immediately the Marathas occupied the fort. Trimbakpant and Moropant were released from the prison. On hearing the news of the success, Shankaraji personally visited Korigadh. Rayaji Bahulkar was beaten and punished for the treachery and was put in prison at Rajgadh. [209] Thus the Marathas made their loss good and inspired great confidence in the people.

By December 1694, the Marathas had one more victory to their credit. Sambhaji Haibatrao Deshmukh of Ashre-Dharane, captured Sudhagadh from the Mughals. [210]

Thus gradually the scales of war were turning against the Mughals. The military activities of the Marathas were spreading to the distant parts of the country. This certainly disturbed Aurangzeb. A contemporary report has well described his condition when it says 'Emperor was loosing his temper as he was receiving the news of fights of the Marathas from all directions. He even did not attend to the court matters. After the court was adjourned he bowed before God and thanked him saying 'the day has passed well'. The imperial provinces from where food grains, treasury and other equipment used to come has reached worse state. All the qil'edars are writing about the troubles of the Marathas. They were neither getting the supplies nor the help in time. The superior officers are not aware about it. The qil'edar (therefore) surrenders the fort. If he is caught alive, the Marathas torture him.' [211]

30. Rajaram's return from Jinji and the Mughal activities in Maharashtra (1698-1700)

In the month of January 1698, the Marathas lost the fort of Jinji to the Mughals. The Maratha king Rajaram, left for

home land. With long marches and after successfully avoiding the vigilant Mughal posts enroute, Rajaram arrived at Khelna [212] (22 February 1698). Aurangzeb ordered Prince Bidar Bakht to proceed to Panhala and punish the Marathas. Aazam who was at Pedgaon was ordered to guard the northern route to Panhala.

There were not many noticeable activities of the Marathas, since April till the end of November. During this period Rajaram seems to have planned the future course of action to meet the challenge of the Mughal armies, occupying the home land. He was also occupied by the problems of state administration and also an internal feud between Dhanaji Jadhav and Ranoji Ghorpade, son of Santaji.

Thus the year 1698 passed without any spectacular gains on either sides. In January 1699, Rajaram visited the forts in Talkonkan. He made adequate arrangements, about provisioning and accoutrement for the soldiers, as he foresaw a prolonged struggle. In June he returned to Satara and at the end of July, he went to Vishalgadh. [213] In the month of September he planned a compaign to march into the territory of Berar. From Berar, he decided to cross the Narmada river and attack the Mughal territory in the North. In the meanwhile he received intelligence about Aurangzeb's itended attack on Satara fort. Immediately he removed his family to Khelna. On his way to Khelna an envoy of Raja of Deogadh, waited upon him. The envoy appealed to Rajaram to join him in order to make common cause against the Mughals. Thus this would have effected a diversion in the rear of Aurangzeb's army. Rajaram readily accepted the offer, and decided to proceed to Gondwan and Berar territories. But before leaving for Berar, he ordered Ranoji Ghorpade with his four thousand troops to remain alert at the foot of Satara. Dhanaji Jadhav, Ramchandrapant, Dado Malhar and other nobles of repute, escorted Rajaram up to the forts of Chandan- Vandan. In his new undertaking he was accompanied by veteran Maratha sardars like, Nemaji

Shinde, Khanderao Dabhade, Parsoji Bhosle and Haibatrao Nimbalkar.

At Chandan-Vandan he halted for three days. Another contingent of twelve thousand troops joined him. After Dasarah,on 31st October, Rajaram rode the horse, towards Suratgaon (Sholapur district) later on this was to prove as the last campaign of his carrier. Unlike the days of Shivaji, the news of his intended march did not remain a secret. The country which was deeply infested with the Mughal spies speedily carried the news to Aurangzeb's camp. [214]

Aurangzeb immediately issued urgent orders to Prince Bidar Bakht, who was at that time twenty miles west of Miraj to go in pursuit of the Maratha force near Barsi and Parenda. Zulfiqar Khan, who was in the Karnataka region was also asked to rush with his army and join Prince Bidar Bakht. Zulfiqar Khan left his baggage at Sholapur and joined Prince Bidar Bakht at Charthana, Chin Qulich Khan who was at Aurangabad was also ordered to join the Prince. But none of them could join the Prince in time i.e. at the time of battle with the Marathas.

Bidar Bakht's army fell upon the Marathas near Parenda. Rajaram, who had encamped eight miles away from the main force, detached Dhanaji with his force in order to stop the march of Bidar Bakht's army. A fierce battle took place, the losses in dead and wounded were quite heavy on both the sides. Finally the Maratha army was defeated. The Marathas then marched towards Ahmadnagar. [216] But Dhanaji with his men attempted to raid the imperial camp at Islampuri. Zulfiqar Khan, the Mughal general, successfully drove away the Marathas. Chin Qulich Khan joined Bidar Bakht at Barsi (near Parenda). By 23/24 November, they reached Ausa in persuit of the Maratha army. And returned to Islampuri after a month's wild chase.

Rajaram, arrived near Satara, and intended to proceed to Vishalgadh. Thus came to an end Rajaram's last campaign

without any results. But it was of great consequence to the Maratha's struggle on the whole, as it gave impetus to the other Maratha chieftains to fight the Mughals, wherever it was possible for them. By now the Marathas divided their army into small divisions under various sardars and spread into various parts of Maharashtra, with the result that it became difficult for the Mughals to oppose them every now and then and run after them without any tangible results or measurable gains.

31. Nemaji Shinde Attacks Burhanpur And Bijagadh - Returns To Thalner

Simultaneously, Maratha sardars headed by Nemaji Shinde with a large army arrived at Burhanpur and besieged that city. For three days Najbat Khan and other Mughal officers fought the Marathas. Later on the Maratha army left for Bijagadh in present Madhya Pradesh. Their intention was to cross the Narmada river at Akbarpur and thus invade Malwa. But Firuz Jang, who was present in that region successfully opposed the Marathas. Then the Marathas, with an army of eight thousand troops, turned to Nandurbar. They ravaged that country. Husain Ali Khan was the *thanedar* of Thalner. He bravely fought with the Marathas, but he was hopelessly outnumbered. A pitched battle took place. Three hundred of Husain Ali Khan's men lay dead, and he was also wounded. He was captured by the Marathas while jumping down from the elephant that he was riding.

The Maratha army got a lot of equipment, horses, elephants and other war material. A sum of two lacs of rupees was demanded as ransom from Husain Ali Khan and the same was paid by him. [215] The Marathas returned victoriously.

Zulfiqar Khan chases the Maratha forces

Ranoji Ghorpade harried the Mughals at Kararabad (Karad) and Sangola. Here Dhanaji's strong force joined him. Hamid-ud-din Khan, who was detached from Satara by Aurangzeb, arrived there with a large army. A great battle

ensued. The Marathas outnumbered him. Many Mughal soldiers were slain and finally, the Khan was put to flight and retreated ignominously to Masur (20-21st December).

To the good fortune of Hamid-ud-din Khan, Zulfiqar Khan, with his army, rushed to his rescue. He arrived at Masur (9/10th January 1700). A fierce battle took place between the Maratha forces under the leadership of Dhanaji, Ranoji and Hanmantrao on the one hand and Zulfiqar Khan's army on the other. The Marathas lost five hundred in killed. Then they retreated from there. Later on Dhanaji attacked the Mughal post at Khanapur and carried away Avji Adhal, the Mughal officer. Subsequently, Zulfiqar Khan reached Khanapur, but then it was too late for him to do anything.

On 25th January 1700, he clashed with Dhanaji near Undirgaon (19 m.s. of Parenda). The Marathas lost about hundred men.

Bhimsen in his account relates that Zulfiqar Khan with his army moved into the territory of Tuljapur, Naldurg and Gunjoti chasing the Marathas. From there he proceeded to Hyderabad, via Pandhri, Mungipaithan, Ashti, Parenda, Nanded, Ausa and Udgir. He fought many a pitched battle with the Marathas who were led by Dhanaji. [217]

At this time Ranoji Ghorpade and Dhanaji were supposed to meet at Almela. Zulfiqar Khan, who received the intelligence of the Maratha movements rushed to Almela. Dhanaji bravely attempted to stop the Mughal army, which was on his persuit. At Ferozabad, a place on the bank of the Bhima, Dhanaji joined Ranoji. It is estimated that Ranoji was in command of thirty-five thousand Maratha troops, where as the Mughal troops under Zulfiqar Khan were estimated to be only three thousand (Bhimsen's exaggeration looks to be limitless). He describes that the Marathas attacked the right flank of the Mughal division. But the attack was successfully repulsed. And the Marathas were put to flight. A large number of Marathas were killed

and innumerable were wounded. At this time Rao Dalpat joined the rear division of the Mughals. [218]

Similarly, Bhimsen records another incident in which Marathas were put to flight by Zulfiqar Khan across the Bhima river and opposite the imperial camp. From there the Marathas left for the territory of Wagingera in Karnaṭaka.

32. Aurangzeb's Fierce Determination To Defeat The Marathas: He Undertakes New Campaign

It was in the forty second regnal year (1698-99) of Aurangzeb's reign that the Maratha armed contingents mustered courage to plunder the territory under the Mughal faujdars in broad day light. By now Aurangzeb was around eighty years of age, yet the oldage could not deter him from his resolve of destroying the Marathas. The reports steadily poured in about the news of the Marathas having become powerful and the country under his possession being plundered freely.

Added to it was a general non-compliance of the royal commands by the military officers, high and low alike. The military generals paid only lip-service to the Emperor. They avoided execution of orders to carry out the operations against the Marathas. The fear of the Maratha arm had struck deep. These military officers would not reach far off places in the persuit of the enemy, they used to turn back without completing the mission assigned to them. They despatched false reports to the Emperor, about their bravery in the face of the enemy and their subsequent victory Therefore, it became a job for the Emperor to scan those reports and verify the authenticity of the news. He punished many noblemen found guilty of those acts. He recovered money for the imperial losses caused on account of neglect and deliberate distortion of the facts. The Akhbarat (news letters) of this period amply speak of these telling events. Many a general of repute from the Mughal army, by now, (1699) had lost their lives in the war that lasted for past seventeen years. Thus the line of loyal obedient and brave

generals had become thin. The administration of the country was in shambles. The problem of law and order had raised its head high. Peace and tranquility were the matters of distant past.

It cannot be stated that Aurangzeb was not aware of these chaotic conditions prevailing in the Mughal dominions which were to prove deterimental to the very existence of the Mughal Empire. But nothing could deter him from his fierce determination of defeating the Marathas. He was bent upon paying dearly for it. When he noticed, that his generals were not carrying out his commands properly, that they showed hesitation in commanding the armies in the battle field that they were being defeated by small bards of the Marathas, he took upon himself, the task of commanding the Mughal armies in the field. He decided to lead them to victory. Therefore he planned a new strategy of defeating the Marathas. The first step in this direction was to conquer all the hill forts which gave shelter to the Maratha king and his followers. He made his plan and mind known to his army generals. Khafi Khan, the contemporary historian has very rightly described and justified the steps proposed by Aurangzeb to defeat the Marathas. 'The shelter of this mean community was the forts. Those should be captured and thus the community was to be up-rooted.' [219]

Accordingly, after the rainy season, the Mughal army blew the trumpets of march from Islampuri in the direction of Vasantgadh in Satara district (19 October 1699). Zulfiqar Khan after the fall of Jinji had returned from the Karnataka and joined the imperial court at Islampuri.

For the last four years (21st May 1695) Aurangzeb had encamped at Islampuri. Most of his generals and army men had well settled down there. They had built houses and were enjoying if not luxuries, atleast common amenities of life. A wall was built round the camp at Islampuri. And the days were passing happily. The Mughal soldiers were earnestly longing to retire to the North, and their respective places of

jagir. They were longing to meet their kith and kin whom they had bade good by some fifteen years back. But alas, they received a jolt when Aurangzeb announced his intention of marching through the hilly tracks of Sahyadri ranges and capturing the forts under the Marathas. This brought a wave of dispair and disappointment among his soldiers. But they set on march from Islampuri into the wilderness of the Sahyadri.

At Islampuri he left his wife Udipuri Begum, son Kambakhsh, daughter Zinat-un-Nisa, the surplus baggage, officials and families of soldiers and bungahs. Prince Aazam and Bidar Bakht joined him on way. His Bakhshi, Asad Khan, with the necessary force remained at Islampuri, to protect that region from the Marathas. Further, two divisions under Zulfiqar Khan, who was lately awarded the title of Nusrat Jang and Ruhullah Khan, assisted by Hamid-ud-din Khan were despatched against the Marathas, in the Marathwada and Satara-Panhala region respectively.

Aurangzeb who had left Islampuri on 19th October 1699 for the campaign of Vasantgadh, [220] reached Miraj in twenty days. He pretended as if he was going to invest Panhala fort. Prince Muhammad Aazam who was summoned from Pedgaon joined him there.

33. Siege And Capture Of Vasantgadh By The Mughals

From Miraj by rapid marches the Mughal army reached Karad. After a brief halt over there, Aurangzeb arrived at Masur, six miles away from Vasantgadh. This was the first camp of the Mughal army in their long and weary march, which was to continue for next six years.

At Masur, he decided to invest Vasantgadh. Immediately orders were issued to Tarbiyat Khan, the chief of artillery to dig the trenches. He was made in charge of the siege work. He carried the artillery equipment under the gate of the fort and placed guns opposite it and launched an attack on the Marathas inside the fort wall. The Maratha garrison faced

the attack bravely. The men did not care for the Mughal cannonade, nor the showering fire of their guns. They counter-attacked the besieging Mughals with the help of guns and muskets. An effective reply by the Maratha garrison made the conquest of the fort, a remote possibility.

Aurangzeb, having learnt about the miserable plight of his soldiers, ordered his imperial tent to be pitched within two miles from the fort. Thus by being very close to the scene of action and with his personal presence, he gave hope and courage to the army, which had become much discouraged.

In the words of his biographer Saqi Must'ad Khan, Aurangzeb declared 'My object in this journey is nothing except holy war (ghaza), so please God and His Prophet. Next morning I shall mount my horse to conduct the assault, and raise my banner to slay the infidels.' [221]

The Maratha qil'edar, who having seen that it was beyond his capacity to retain the fort in the face of a large army of the enemy, agreed to hand over the fort after having received a large sum. His men, their families on the fort, were allowed to go out unmolested. Thus Aurangzeb captured Vasantgadh on 25th Novermber 1699. The fort was renamed as Kalid-i-Fath, i.e. 'key of victory'. [222]

But it was an irony of fate, that this very 'key of victory' was to turn into 'key of destruction', i.e. 'Kalid-i-Fana' in the years that followed the event. Now onwards, we notice, the real tragedy of the Mughal invasion of the Maratha land. The victorious Mughal army got disillusioned soon.

34.1 Siege of Satara - A Tragedy of the Mughals

After the capture of Vasantgadh, Aurangzeb with his army left for Satara (8th December 1699). He crossed the Krishna river and reached Karanja (24th December). The Mughals pitched their tents with a regular compound wall around the camp.

The fort of Satara is eleven hundred meters in length and in width six hundred meters, in height it is about hundred

meters from the surrounding region and tapers in a triangular form at its top. It has got two main gates, one on the northern side and the other on the southern side. In the north east of the fort is Mangalai Gate, comparatively a small one. The fort is situated on thirty meter steep rock and above the rock a stone wall of six meters high was built in order to extend adequate protection from the guns of the invaders.

Aurangzeb was fully aware of the topography of the fort. He ordered Tarbiyat Khan to dig the trenches and carry the guns to some suitable elevations, from where they could be effectively operated. It was indeed a difficult task as the land was completely rocky, yet with the help of Hirachand and Daula, the two masons, he accomplished this difficult task of digging the trenches and raised rafts and platforms. In a short time the heavy guns were conveyed and mounted on these strategic places.

Simultaneously, Aurangzeb posted Prince Aazam and Khudabanda Khan on the western side of the fort. Tarbiyat Khan was positioned in front of Mangalai Gate, Munim Khan was asked to be on his right, Ruhullah Khan assisted by Mansur Khan, was made in charge of the operations towards Southern Gate. Mansur Khan was also incharge of Deccani artillery. Thus the most important generals with a large army under them were oredered to surround the fort. They kept watch on the movements of the Marathas. Orders were issued to enforce strict blockade of the fort from all sides.

34.2 Maratha efforts to fight the siege

The Maratha qil'edar on the fort was Subhanji. He was fully aware of the danger to which the fort and his men were exposed. The other Maratha leaders like Ramchandrapant and Parshuram Trimbak, were also aware of the siege of the fort and the expected outcome.

They were preparing themselves with a resolve to fight. Parshurampant wrote to Vithoji Babar Deshmukh of karyat

Nane Ghol (22nd December) that 'Rajaram was at Sinhgadh and was organising a large army in order to march against Aurangzeb ... Hearing this news, a confusion has prevailed in the enemy camp ... with the grace of God, Aurangzeb is being defeated .... the enemy is not to be cared for [223] ...' Vithoji was asked to recruit more men in order to continue the fight. Similar orders were issued to Suro Vithal the havaldar of Bamnoli to attack Aurangzeb's troops. Chandajirao, Yamajirao and Tanajirao Kandatkar were in the vicinity of Satara to fight the Mughals. Subhanji Kandatkar with his men was posted at Ambavala ghat in order to guard the passage. [224]

Dhanaji Jadhav, Malhar rao, Nemaji Shinde, Parsoji Bhosale and many other prominent generals, who were carrying on the operations, across the Bhima, were recalled to attack and break the siege line. In order to divert the attention of the Mughal forces near Satara, the Marathas, deployed fifteen thousand strong men under the generalship of Ranoji Ghorpade and Madhavrao in the territory of Chandan-Vandan. [225]

The qil'edar had also managed to keep a few guns in readiness and so also the storage of necessary supplies, which would have been required had the siege operations prolonged. In the words of Saqi Must'ad Khan, 'There were brave people on the fort. To them sacrifice of their lives was a most trifling thing. They were capable of charging rockets, small rifles and many other firearms like Hukka, Chadar and Matwala.' [226]

Such was the preparation of the Maratha force besieged by Aurangzeb. The Mughal army being very large could have at any time outnumbered the besieged. They were in possession of superior arms, better equipment, plenty of ammunition and above all big guns which were capable of blowing up the mountains with disasterous results. [227] The Mughal forces had dug the trenches with firm resolve to capture the fort.

34.3 The Mughals attack the fort and Marathas attack the siege line

The Mughals tightened up siege effort from all sides. They fired guns. But due to lack of accurate aim, it could not create. any effect, it almost amounted to wastage of ammunition. On 17th December, Aurangzeb under his personal supervision launched an attack but with little success. Some more time was allowed to pass by Aurangzeb, before launching the next attack.

On the other hand field forces of the Marathas under Dhanaji and Shankarajipant made frequent attacks on the besieging army. Foraging parties of the Mughals were escorted by strong force as the Marathas often attacked them. They ravaged the country surrounding the Mughal camp. They did not permit grain to reach the Mughal soldiers nor forage for their animals. They attacked the outposts of the Mughals and captured Ghori Khan; the faujdar of Kararabad (Karad) though rescued later by Hamid-ud-din Khan. On 27th December, Ikhlas Khan was encircled by Hanumantrao (Nimbalkar) in the vicinity of the Mughal camp. He and his son were put to death. So also many other soldiers were killed. The Marathas appeared in small bands on all sides of the besieging Mughal army. [228] They used to fall upon them with lightening speed, and equally fast they used to disappear. Thus throughout the siege the Marathas could frequently go inside the fort and come out with equal ease, from the direction of the gate, which Prince Aazam was supposed to guard. He was suspected of being in league with them.

On 11th December, at night, the Marathas came out of the fort and attacked the division under Munim Khan. A pitched battle took place. The Mughals successfully turned away the Marathas with some losses in manpower. A similar attack was launched by the Marathas on the night of 16th December. Two prominent Mughal sardars faced the attack. Munim Khan and Satvaji Daphale's son Bajirao showed

great valour. Though Munim Khan was injured still the Marathas were repulsed. [229]

These activities of the Marathas created devastating effects on the Mughals. Firstly all the supplies of food grains and the forage from outside was stopped. The grain prices in the Mughal camp shot up very high and the poorer class was forced to starve. Equally worst was the condition of their animals. There was neither forage nor grass for the horses. The cumulative effect of all this was that the men strongly expressed about abandonment of the siege. In other words, they themselves had now become the victims of the siege.

But Aurangzeb was a matchless military leader. These attacks of the Marathas did not make any impression on him. He looked to be more determined than ever before. He gave up his plan of spending month of Ramzan at Sholapur and took upon himself to guide the operations.

He ordered Fath-ullah Khan and Ruhullah Khan to take their battaries up to the main gate of the fort. Trenches were dug near the fort. Mukhalis Khan and Hamid-ud-din Khan with a few thousand foot soldiers and Karnataki musketeers were ordered to remain at the foot of the fort.[230]

Tarbiyat Khan, the chief of the Mughal artillery, raised his gun platform twentyfour meters high, to the level of the bastion of the fort gate. In procuring materials for it, not a tree was left standing within thirty or forty kos of Satara. Eight thousand sacks were taken from the grain market and filled with sand to form a bulwark round it. Three hundred oxen were employed to transport timber for the battery. But the stones showered by the Maratha garrison made further progress impossible. Orders were then issued to fill the empty chests of the public treasury and of the money changers with stone and sand and line the battery with them. One hundred and fifty water carriers were stationed there to put out fire promptly.[231]

The Mughal army generals were making tremendous efforts to secure the fort. But they had little success. The

Maratha opposition under its veteran qil'edar Subhanji was more than formidable. Whenever the garrison had an opportunity to retaliate, it rebuffed well.

This brought great despair in the Mughal camp. The chief of artillery, Tarbiyat Khan, dug a mine, with great effort. It was twenty-four meters long and reached under the fort wall. The Mughal plan was to breach the fort wall and carry on an assault. But under the then circumstances it was considered impracticable and therefore it was given up. Immediately, a surprise attack, by two thousand Mavale, who were known for their skill in hill climbing in the Mughal army, was carried out. The Mavales were paid three years pay in advance, as an incentive for successful accomplishment of the task. But the Marathas, who had spread their network of spying in the Mughal camp, received the intelligence much before the actual hour of operations. They all waited in readiness. The attack was launched a little before the dawn on 23rd January. It was met with equal firmness by the Marathas and thus both the element of surprise and attack had failed.

During this period, the Maratha troops in small divisions were carrying out their surprise attacks on the Mughal lines of siege. On the night of 1st April, a division of the Maratha army marched from Parali. It was effectively checked by the Mughal generals Ruhullah Khan and Fath-ullah-Khan. The next day three hundred men from the garrison of the fort sallied forth. They attacked the besieging Mughal troops and spoiled the siege work. They lost five in killed and were repulsed. Fath-ullah Khan was wounded, in the clash. .

34.4 Mines Blown to Capture the Fort:

As Aurangzeb came to know about the failure of surprise attack by the Mavale, he immediately ordered Fath-ullah Khan and Ruhullah Khan to run another trench from the side of the Mangalai gate of the fort. On 15th March, they carried it under the *rewani* of the fort and within about a month completed rest of the work. It was the night of 12th

April 1700, dark and cool, the Mughal army, including cavalry, infantry, artillery, Khaschauki, Afghan and Ghakkhar men, Karnataki troops and the brave generals like Hamid-ud-din Khan and Mukhlis Khan took their positions for a desperate battle the next morning. The sky was clear and the cool wind was blowing. Opposite Mangalai gate, the Mughal troops formed in a battle array. A potentially destructive mine twenty-four meters in length was laid under the fort wall, by the chief of the Mughal artillery to hurl destruction into the bosom of their foes. The midnight storm wailed its mournful requiem over the sleeping host. The hostile host were at but a cannon shot from each other. Indomitable determination inflammed the souls of the Maratha officers and soldiers. It was an awful night, the harbinger of a still more awful day. The dark morning of 13th April, had not yet dawned when the fuse of first mine was lit. One could well imagine what havoc it must have created. It was terrible. The very earth shook beneath the tremendous detonation. It created an un-intermitted roar of the most deafening and appalling thunder. The Marathas who were in the region of explosion presented themselves unprotected to the flying missiles of stones from the exploded wall. The air was soon so filled with smoke that the day was as dark as the night. Under this black and sulphurous canopy the infuriated Mughal soldiers rushed in. Horsemen plunged to charge. Prayagji Prabhu, the havaldar of the fort was burried alive under the debris of the wall. [232]

A few minutes passed, as both the sides were plunged into utter confusion, the second mine was blown up by the skilled Mughal artillery men. Like the previous one it made enormous sound and blew up a large portion of the wall. But unlike the previous one, this time the hills of clay and stones were showered on thousands of Mughals, who were already in forward march. Two thousand were burried instantly under the ground. The bodies of wounded and the dead covered the plain. Many of the torn and bleeding victims were trampled by the rush of frenzied charges. The piercing

shrieks rose above the roar of explosion. Prominent among the dead were Sakhi Khan, Sayyid Shamasuddin-Khan, Ahmad Khan Lodhi, Asad-ud-din Ahmad and Muhammad Baqir. [233]

The explosion caused seventy meters breach in the fort wall. With disasterous second explosion there was none from the Mughal army to assault the Marathas who were defenceless. It was so sudden that it stunned the Mughal soldiers so much that they were paralysed of any action. Prayagji's body was removed from the debris and surprisingly he was still alive and uninjured. The loss of the Marathas was comparatively less. They recovered from the shock speedily and charged the Mughals. Meanwhile they started repairing the walls speedily.

Thus the Mughal plan was upset. All the Mughal efforts were undone in a twinkle. Speedily the news was carried to Aurangzeb. He rushed to the scene and consoled the crying and ailing army men. He issued orders to Sarafraz Khan to take men and make fresh efforts to attack. Next day Bahlia infantry men, who lost many of their relatives, on seeing that it was impossible to extract their dead bodies, secretly set fire to the whole wooden work. [234] And it is reported that the fire continued for seven days, the flames consuming Hindus and Muslims alike. The whole siege work was in flames, so also the surrounding area was ablaze. An eye witness has described it that nearly two thousand men awfully torn by explosion were prostrate upon bloodstained earth. A wail of anguish rose, which froze the heart of the beholder with terror. Fragments of projectiles, guns, swords, horses dead or cruelly mangled, neighing, plunging, shrieking in their agony presented a scene of unparalled horror. And still the battle continued.

34.5 The Marathas Surrender The Fort.

After the disasterous explosion and a big breach in the fort wall, the condition of the Maratha qil'edar became quite precarious. The qil'edar Subhanji was fighting the fort more

on moral courage than on any material supply of the things. During the siege since December till April, the stocks of food grains which were stored were consumed, there was not much of external supply, though Shankarajipant, once replenished the stocks from Parali. Secondly, the frequent attacks of the Mughals had adversely affected the manpower on the fort. The breach in the fort wall was irrepariable, day by day the Marathas were being exposed to the guns of their enemies. Considering the situation and possible defeat, the qil'edar decided to surrender the fort. He sent a word to Ramchandrapant and Shankarajipant about the same. Ramchandrapant and Shankarajipant through Ramaji Pandit and Abaji Pandit respectively sent for the terms of capitualations to Prince Aazam. The Prince in turn, got the sanction for the same from Aurangzeb. On 21st April, 1700, the Marathas vacated the fort. The Marathas were permitted to go out unmolested. The Mughals secured seven guns, five rehkala, nine jamburak gun, fourteen maunds of powder and ten rockets. As the fort was secured through the negotiations of Prince Aazam it was named as Aazamtara.

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NOTES

1. SCP, pp. 34-35.
2. ibid, p.35
3. ibid, p.35
4. Factory Records, Madras Diary 14 November and 26 December 1689
5. Raja Ram Charitam, p.35
6. SCP, p.35
7. Akh, Julus 33, Shawwal 28, No further details are available about this brave soldier Rambhaji-
8. Raja Ram Charitam
9. Did Rajaram travel like a gosavi? Or marched like a soldier? Jedhe Shakavali p.35 clearly uses the words i.e.'he rode the horse like a soldier.'
10. Rajaram by G.S. Sardesai, p.25
11. Neralikar Desai Persian papers collection, B.I.S. Mandal, Pune. Letter from Bahadur Khan to Algonda Desai of Hukeri dated 14th Rajab Julus 32. (No. 68)
12. Ibid, letter dt.25th Rajab, Julus 32, (No.44)
13. MA, p.328
14. MA, p.328. The last name Mania Ghorpare identified by Prof. Sarkar appears to be incorrect. Mania, it is suggested can be read as Malya, which might have been originally Maloji, as it was a common practice with the Persian writers to write the names in this style, for example, they have written, Santya for Santaji, Moytya for Mohite, etc.
15. Ibid, p.329
16. Rajaram by G.S. Sardesai, p.26
17. SCP, p.35, Varsor is probably Vellore
18. For details of Rajaram's journey, see Keladi Nripavijaya in Kannad. It gives the details about the names of places etc. Rajaram visited enroute.
19. SCP, p.35
20. Ibid.
21. HGR,p.265 suggests name of Shamji Rao Punde as Mantri, Niraji Rauji as chief justice, Santaji Ghorpade as commander-in-chief and also includes Srikaracharya Kalgaonkar as Pandit Rao, the last one was certainly not a ministerial post.
22. SCP, p.35
23. F.Martin's Memoires, Vol.III, p.33
24. Ibid, p.77

25. Ibid, p.89
26. Ibid, pp.119-20
26a. District Gazetteer, South Arcot, i. pp.347-348 South Arcot Manual, p.413
26b. South Arcot Manual, p.418
27. Factory Records, Madras Diary, 1 & 22nd September 1690. Tarikh-i-Dilkusha, 98 b. From JS it appears that Zulfiqar Khan arrived at Jinji on 27th August and laid siege to the fort immediately.
28. SCP, p.35
29. Ibid.
30. HA, Vol.V, p.69
31. Ibid, p.72
32. SCP, pp.35-36
33. HS, p.240
34. MA.p.352, Dilkusha, 99b.
35. Ibid
36. Ibid, pp.354-355
37. Ibid, p.354
38. Akh. J 35, Rabi II, 26.
39. Dilkusha, p.100a.
40. MA, p.350
41. HA, Vol.V p.76
42. HS, p.242
43. Dilkusha, pp.105a-106b.
44. Ibid
45. F.Martin's Memoires, Vol.III, pp.179-81
46. Ibid, p.193
47. Ibid, p.204
48. Akh, J.36 Zihijjah 1.
49. F.Martin's Memoires, Vol.III, p.244. The Marathas captured 3000 oxen loaded with provisions going to the Mughal camp.
50. Akh, J.36, Rabi I 22
51. SCP, p.36
52. KK, p.415
53. KK, p.416
54. SCP, p.36, VR, 24 Jamadi II, Julus 36.
55. Ibid and Akh J.36, Sh'aban 1. MA.p.357 maintains,it was Santaji who captured Ism'ailKhan Makh. But SCS, Vol.V, No.778, p.23 and JS, p.36 clearly state that it was Dhanaji who captured Ism'ailKhan. Evidently the name has been mistaken in Persian sources.
56. F.Martin's Memoires, Vol.III, p.271

57. MA, p.357
58. Ibid, p.358, Dilkusha, p.107b
59. SCP, p.36
60. HA, Vol.V, p.88
61. Ibid
62. Dilkusha, p.109b
63. Ibid, p.110a, FR, Madras dt.8 January 1693 state that 'The Mughal army being before Jinji Dhana Jadhav and several other great persons surrounded that army, whereby they cut them off from all manner of provisions coming to the Prince and Asad Khan whereupon many of the Mughal merchants and shopkeepers came to us upon our granting them our qaul and we doubt not in 4 or 5 days to have all our enemies in Jinji fort.'
64. HA, Vol.V, p.90
65. F.Martin's Memoires, Vol.III, pp.286-87
66. Akh. J.37 Ramzan 4, MM, p.119
67. Dilkusha, p.110b.
68. SCP, p.36
69. Ibid, p.37, The date indicated in JS is 23 April 1693.
70. Ibid.
71. Ibid.
72. This fort is 18 miles north of Pondicherry and 6 miles east of Tindivanam, HA, Vol.V, p.97.
73. Dilkusha, p.114a.
74. SCP, p.37
75. HA, Vol.V, p.98
76. Dilkusha, p.114b. Akh, Julus 38, Zihijjah 5.
77. Dilkusha, p.115b, Akh. J.38, Safar 12.
78. SCS, Vol.V, No.729, pp.81-82.
79. HA, Vol.V, pp.100-101.
80. SCP, p.37
81. SCP, p.38
82. Ibid.
83. SCP, p.39
84. PIHRC, Vol.XIX, pp.160-161, Letter from Fort St. David to Fort St. George dated 29 July 1697.
85. SCP, p.39, Dilkusha p.122b.
86. MA, p.338.
87. PIHRC, Vol. XXII, p.84. This is an unrecorded campaign of the Mughals. The information is based on a document, which is an original order given by a divisional officer of Rajaram dt. 7th November 1691. It refers to a grant made to the

Desaies, Desh Kulkarnis, Nadgaudas of the Ajra sub-division. Document does not mention the date of siege, but that of grant which was not long after the siege.

88. SCS, Vol.XII, No.46, p.26.
89. HA, Vol.V, p.41
90. SCS, Vol.XII, No.89, p.28.
91. Ibid No.51, p.29.
92. Ibid No.52, p.30.
93. Parwana dt.J.35 Ramzan 8 (From archival collection BIS Mandal, Pune)
94. Akh, J.35, Rabi II, 25.
95. KK, p.417.
96. APYV, No.4, p.6.
97. HA, Vol.V, p.42.
98. Akh, J.36, Zihijjah 26.
99. Akh, J.36, Rabi I, 21.
100. HA, Vol.V, p.42.
101. SCS, Vol.VI
102. Akh, J.36, Rabi I, 23.
103. HA, Vol.V, p.80.
104. Place of overtaking appears to be Bhupalgadh, 65 miles n.w. of Bijapur.
105. Torgal. An important fort under the Adil Shahis, in the Bijapuri Karnataka.
106. HA, Vol.V, pp.43-45. Sarkar's narrative is based on Akhbarat, hence reproduced extensively. Akhbarat dated 22 Oct.1693 (J.37 Rabi I, 2) give no more detailed information about Santaji's movements. It states 'Hamid-ud-din Khan and Khwaja Khan who were with Himmat Khan went towards Gulbarga in pursuit of Santa. Santa sent Amrit Rao with 4000 cavalry towards Berar. He has got 6000 men. From Bidar he went towards Malkhed. Aurangzeb ordered Hamid-ud-din Khan and Khwaja Khan to go in pursuit of Amrit Rao. Asad Khan along with Lashkar Khan accompanied by his men was ordered to help Himmat Khan and chase Santa.'
107. Ibid. p.46.
108. SCP, p.37. Santaji left for Jinji during October-November 1694. Sarkar in HA, Vol.VI, pp.47-49 gives the encounters between Santaji and Himmat Khan and Hamid-ud-din Khan during this period. If J S is considered as an authentic source, then Sarkar's information becomes superfluous. It is not known the source material on which Sarkar has based his narrative.

109. KK p.431 gives more vivid and interesting account about how Mughal Sardars secretly planned to go inside the fort and did not care for others.

110. According to KK, p.430, the battle continued for 4 days. This seems to be most unlikely, the Mughals would have completely perished if they had stayed there for more than two days.

111. According to the author of Ma'sir-i-Alamgiri, Qasim Khan was an opium-eater. His life depended on it and lack of it caused the death, but many suspected of suicide for the possible disgrace in near future, at the hands of Aurangzeb.

112. KK, p.433, gives the amount as seven lac rupees. SCP, p.38 indicates one lac of rupees.

113. MA, pp.375-79. KK, pp.428-33.

The date of the Battle of Dodderi

According to MA, p.375 Khanazad Khan and Qasim Khan united their forces before sighting the enemy on 23rd Jamadi II, 1107 (19 Jan.1696). According to Sarkar this date is wrong by two months. In his opinion Akhbarat, which is a more trustworthy source, shows that 'on that day the mace bearers sent by the Emperor returned to him at Brahmapuri after delivering his gifts to the vanquished officers, who had then reached Adoni. Qasim Khan had died more than a month before 19 Jan. The Madras Diary records on 5th December, 1695, that Qasim Khan having been already defeated (say, about 20th November) (HA, Vol.V, p.119 footnote).

According to SCP, p.38 (Jedhe Shakavali) 'after Paush (S) 11, S.1617 (after 5 January, 1696) Santaji Ghorpade imprisoned Qasim Khan and Khanazad Khan. Qasim Khan died, Khanazad Khan paid ransom of one lac of rupees.'

Therefore, from the above sources it appears that, Dodderi was not besieged before 5th January by the Marathas. In other words Qasim Khan died sometime after 5th January and not on 20th November as Prof. Sarkar maintains.

If we accept J.S. as authentic source, then both M A and Prof. Sarkar appear to be incorrect.

114. MA, p.379.

115. HA, Vol.V, pp.120-121. Sarkar's information is based on Akhbarat, hence it has been extensively reproduced. MA, p.379, SCP, p.38, gives the date of killing Himmat Khan as sometime between December 1695 and January 1696.

116. HA, Vol.V., p.122.
117. Ibid.
118. Akh, J.39, Shaban 2.
119. Akh, J.40 Ramzan 12.
120. Akh, J.40, Ziqadah 8.
121. SCS, Vol.III, No.479, pp.85-86.
122. Dilkusha, p.123a.
123. Wilkes, History of Mysore, i. p.133
124. Dilkusha, p.124a.
125. Ibid, p.124b. The narrative is largely based on Bhimsen's Dilkusha. There is no other source material either to corraborate or contradict the same.

Note on the date of capture of Jinji by the Mughals

(1) According to M A , p.391, Jinji was captured by the Mughals on 16th Shaban, 1109 (18th February 1698). I do not know from where Prof.J.N. Sarkar has borrowed the date 6th Shaban, (7th February). Apparently it seems that Sarkar, incorrectly read 6 for 16th Shaban (H. A. Vol.V, p.108). Therefore, later historians, Sardesai and Pagadi, both have repeated the same mistake, i.e., fall of Jinji on 7th February (6th Shaban).

(2) According to Gadadhar Pralhad Shakavali (S.C.P. p.66) it was taken by Zulfiqar Khan on Paush (Bd) 12, S.1691 (the day of Sankrant-30th December, 1697). Thus, there is a radical difference between the dates of the above two sources. According to Bhimsen, an eye witness (Dilkusha 135a) the fort fell on Sankrant , which according to Sarkar would correspond to 2nd or 31st January. There is one more source, Madras Diary of 2nd January, 1698, which says, 'A letter from Amir Jahan from the Mughal camp received today advises that the Nawab has taken the Jinji fort all but one which also offers to capitulate' (H A Vol.V, p.108 - Foot Note). Another source, Letters to Fort St. George, p.6 as quoted in HGR pp.346-47, says 'that Zulfikar Khan had taken Gingee and became absolute master of the country and also warned the fort St.David authorities to be very careful and be prepared for an attack'. This letter was written on 5th January.

(3) From the above sources, it appears that, Madras Diary, Fort St. George and Bhimsen are very close to exactness in giving the date as mentioned in G.P. Shakavali. Therefore, I am inclined to believe the date of this incident i.e. the date of the fall of Jinji as 30th December 1697.

126. MSIH, Vol.I, No.76; pp.66 and SCS, Vol.II, No.225, pp.222-23.
127. MA, p.326
128. KIS, No.3, p.5
129. VR, J.32, Ramzan 5.
130. Aurangzeb's farman to Khem Sawant, J.32 Ramzan 21.
131. SCS, Vol.VI, No.112, p.76
132. MA, p.330
133. MA, p.331
134. SCS, Vol.XII, No.43, p.25
135. Akh., J.33, Shawwal 4.
136. Akh., J.33, Shawwal 3.
137. HA, Vol.V, p.150
138. Akh, J.33, Shawwal 22.
139. Akh, J.33, Shawwal 24.
140. MA, p.331, SCP, p.35 gives the date as 4th November.
141. HA, Vol.V, p.32
142. Akh, J.33, Safar 2.
143. MA, p.332
144. SDA, No.780, p.vii
145. Akh, J.33, Rabi I, 17.
146. SCP, p.36
147. Rajwade, Vol.XVII, No.20,SCS, Vol.VI, No.113.
148. Ibid, Vol.XV, No.282, pp.288-90
149. KK, p.392, Akh. J.34, Shawwal 26.
150. Rajwade Vol.XV, No.283, p.290
151. HA, Vol.V, p.30 (Ishwardas 141a-143-a and MA, p.336). According to Prof. Sarkar, the date of attack is 25th May. J S p.36 gives 25th May (S.1612 Vaish. B.12). Sarkar also mentions that this is the first signal victory of the Marathas. There are two Marathi letters written by Ramchandra Nilkanth to Marne Deshmukh of Muthekhore and Haibatrao Silimkar Deshmukh Tal.Gunjan Maval dt.6 May, 1690 (S.1612 Vaish S.8), stating that the fort of Wai, Pratapgadh and other forts have been taken by the Marathas, though J S mentions this incident after 25th May. Therefore, it creates doubt in our minds, if taking of Wai, Pratapgadh and other forts was not the first major victory of the Marathas? A letter from Ramchandrapant to Marne Deshmukh,SCS, Vol.VI, No.113 and another letter from Ramchandrapant to Silimkar Deshmukh, Rajwade Vol. xvii/No.20, p.37. confirms the same.
152. HA, Vol.V, p.31

153. MA, p.337
154. Insha-I Madhoram. HA, Vol.V, p.40
155. Rajwade Vol.XVI, No. 27, p.43
156. Akh. J.34, Zihijjah 16.
157. Akh, J.34, Zihijjah 14.
158. Akh, J.34, Muharram 4.
159. Akh, J.34, Muharram 9.
160. Akh, J.34, Muharram 10.
161. Rajwade, Vol.XV.
162. Ibid, No.352, p.382
163. Akh, J.35, Muharram 23.
164. Akh, J.35, Muharram 22.
165. Akh, J.35, Muharram 29.
166. Akh, J.35, Safar 2.
167. Akh, J.35, Safar 5.
168. Akh, J.35, Rabi II 5.
169. Akh, J.35, Rabi II 6.
170. SCP, p.36
171. MA, p.347
172. Rajwade, Vol. VIII, No.43, p.46
173. SCP, p.36
174. VR, dated J.36, Ziqadah 27.
175. SL.pp.166-67.
176. SCS, Vol.V, No.267, pp.10-12
177. SCS, Vol.II, NO.255, pp.222-23 and SCS, Vol.VI, p.79
178. SCS, Vol.VI, No.117, pp.79-80, and Rajwade, Vol.XV, No.354, pp.384-85.
179. Rajwade Vol.XV, No.352, pp.382-83.
180. SCS, Vol.VIII, No. 47, pp.52-53.
181. Ibid, Vol.V, No. 923, p.172
182. Ibid, Vol.V, No.849, p.104
183. MA, p.360.
184. HA, Vol.V, pp.34-35, SCP, p.37, does not give the date of attack. However, the Maratha relieving force arrived at Panhala during October-November. (Kartik, Saka 1615). As a result of it he lifted the siege and withdrew.
185. Akh, J.36, Shaban 29.
186. Akh, J.37, Ramzan 1
187. Akh, J.37, Ramzan 5.
188. Akh, J.37, Ramzan 11.
189. Akh, J.37, Shawwal 13.
190. Akh, J.37, Zihijjah 6 & 11.
191. HA, Vol.V, p.36

192. I have extensively quoted from HA Vol.V, pp.34-38 by J.Sarkar. In the words of Sarkar 'The entire narrative from Dhana's attack on Muiz to this point has been reconstructed from Akhbarat or daily news letters of Aurangzeb's camp preserved in MS in London.' There is no other source material available so far either to corraborate or contradict the same.
193. SCS, Vol.V, Nos.845 & 846, pp.98-101.
194. Ibid, No.847, pp.101-2.
195. Akh, J.36, Shaban 1
196. Akh, J.36, Shaban 6.
197. Akh, J.36, Shaban 22.
198. Akh, J.36, Shaban 28.
199. Akh, J.36, Shaban 25.
200. Akh, J.37, Ramzan 1.
201. SCS, Vol.V, No.936, pp.188-90. The date of capture of the fort is given (S.1615 Ashadh (S) 8) corresponding to 1 July, 1693. In recognition of the excellent service rendered by Navaji Balkavade, he was given the village of Savargaon as *inam* with all the customary rights.
202. Akh, J.37, Muharram 23.
203. Akh, J.37, Muharram 21.
204. MSIH, Vol.VI, No.9, p.10.
205. SCS, Vol.IV, No.278, pp.80-81.
206. A certain person called Doge was sent by the Mughals to conduct the transaction.
207. SCS, Vol.V, No.939, pp.190-91. In appreaciation of his services, Balkavade was given village Mukhed in *'inam'*.
208. SCP, pp.37-38. This happened sometime after 15 September.
209. Ibid, p.39. This took place after November 1694.
210. SCS, Vol.X, No.23, p.36.
211. VR. dated Julus, 37, Zihijjah 24.
212. SCP, p.66.
213. HA, Vol.V, p.131. Rajaram arrived at Khelna in February-March (SCP,p.66).
214. HA, Vol.V, p.132, Prof. Sarkar's narrative reads as if Rajaram intended to go to Surat in Gujrat. This gives us a mistaken impression. This might have happened, perhaps, as Prof.Sarkar was unable to identify the place name Suratgaon near Barsi in Sholapur district.
215. KK, pp.456-58. No other Persian source has given this information. According to Bhimsen, Krishna Sawant a Maratha sardar crossed the Narmada with 15,000 men. He

ravaged the territory surrounding Dhamuni. From there, he retreated. Since the days of Muslim sultans till date the Marathas had never crossed the Narmada. As usual Bhimsen has not given the date of the incident. But it is quite likely that the event might have taken place at the same time as, Nemaji Shinde and others crossed the Narmada, as mentioned by Khafi Khan.

216. HA, Vol.V, pp.133-34. According to Prof.Sarkar the incident took place on 13/14 November.
217. MM, p.145
218. Ibid, p.146. Firuzabad is on the banks of the Bhima river in Gulbarga district.
219. KK, p.459
220. Vasantagadh is a hilly fort, 25 miles s.w. of Satara in Karad Taluq. It was in the possession of the Marathas and was well known, for its strength in those days.
221. MA, p.441.
222. The narrative of this campaign is based on MA, pp.408-11 and KK, p.462.
223. Ramdas ani Ramdasi, Vol.VIII, p.92
224. SCS, Vol.V, No.27, p.180
225. Ramdas ani Ramdasi, Vol.VII, p.92.
226. MA, p.414
227. Ibid.
228. HA, Vol.V, p.163
229. PIHRC, Vol.IV, p.6
230. KK, p.465
231. HA, Vol.V, p.16
232. MA, pp.416-17 PIHRC Vol.IV, p.9
233. Ibid, p.10, MM p.148
234. MA, p.419
235. MA, pp.420-21 PIHRC, Vol.IV, pp.10-11.

3. Shivaji II and the Mughal Conquest of the Maratha land (1700-1704)

Death Of Rajaram And The Problem Of Succession

On 21st April 1700, the Marathas surrendered Satara to the Mughals. Exactly fifty days earlier another calamity had befallen the Maratha kingdom. It was indeed a terrible stroke of providence. On 2nd March 1700, Rajaram, the Maratha king, bade farewell to this earthly kingdom forever. He was at Sinhgadh when he was enveloped in a terrible fever, a disease from which he was never to recover. The ailment of fever was aggravated by vomiting of blood and before he could finally settle the arrangements of his kingdom, the hand of providence separated him from his beloved country. The best years and the most creative days of his life, he sacrificed for the independence of Maharashtra. At the peril of his life he faced the invading Mughal armies. When the kingdom was facing disintegration, he took upon himself to guide the destinies of four million people. With untiring efforts he worked to push back the Mughal invasion. He never cared for personal comforts and luxury. Ever he wished to sacrifice himself for this noble cause of Swaraj and Maharashtra Dharma and therefore, there is no wonder had he prayed for a martyr's death. Alas! The providence and fate were cruel enough in not granting him this so cherished a prayer. By the hard toil of day and night for the protection of his people, the energy and life force of the Maratha king were consumed like a slow burning candle, giving light and energy to its seekers.

The unexpected blow of Rajaram's death was too severe for the Maratha people in general and the leaders in

particular. During the short span of their nations's life, the Maratha people and its leaders had of course experienced more severe and cruel blows in the past. Every calamity that befell the nation brought along with the train of sadness, some ray of hope and aspiration for the future in the form of a new leader. After the death of Shivaji, people looked upon Sambhaji to guide the destiny of the nation. He rose to the occasion. He tried to fulfil their hopes till his most cruel and unforgettable death. After Sambhaji people rushed to Rajaram as their legitimate leader and a sheetanchor of the Maratha state. He proved himself to be worthy of that trust, by devoting his energies to the cause of Swaraj.

In his short but most memorable span of life he offered determined opposition to the Mughal arms, with an indomitable courage. Aurangzeb had blissfully hoped that with the death of Sambhaji the Maratha opposition would be crushed completely. But with the rise of Rajaram, in a short period, he realised that his hope had belied his beliefs. It was indeed not an easy task for him to subdue the Marathas.

With the rise of Rajaram, the Mughal-Maratha struggle took a new turn. His sudden death prevented him from bringing it to a successful end. In his death, the nation was bereft of a king and an ardent fighter for the cause of Swaraj.

Immediately after his death came to the forefront the crucial question of succession to the throne. The heirs apparant to the Maratha throne were two minor sons of Rajasbai and Tarabai, as Shahu the son of Sambhaji, was in Aurangzeb's captivity.

As both these women were ambitious and crafty by nature, each one wanted her own son to succeed. Therefore, the problem remained unresolved. The situation had started deteriorating day by day. Each of these widows canvassed for the support of the most prominent Maratha generals. Ramchandrapant, the veteran leader and a champion of the Maratha cause, under whose able leadership the Marathas

had successfully fought Aurangzeb during Rajaram's stay at Jinji, was placed in a most embarrassing situation. The quarrel for the succession to the throne was heading towards a crisis and was likely to cause cleavage in the rank and file of the Marathas. This was to be carefully avoided. It would have been unwise to allow the differences to come to the surface. A precaution was necessary to avoid frontal confrontation between the Maratha nobles on either sides. They had to guard against any possible dissensions, desertions, which would have ultimately weakened the cause of the unity of the Marathas. Aurangzeb was likely to take advantage of the situation by winning over one party or the other by his usual tact and diplomacy. In other words, the very existence of the Maratha kingdom was on the threshold of destruction. Dhanaji Jadhav, Shankaraji Narayan and Parashuram Trimbak were keeping the Mughal armies occupied elsewhere, yet it did not reduce the gravity of the situation. What was required was most tactful, diplomatic, cool and calculated handling of the situation.

And we find that Ramchandrapant made efforts by using his ability and tact in bringing about a peaceful solution to the problem. Shivaji II, son of Tarabai, was hardly four years old and Sambhaji II, son of Rajasbai had not even completed two years of age. As both the contestants to the throne were minors, Ramchandrapant, suggested to run the government in the name of Prince Shahu who was in the prison of the Mughals. But this solution was not acceptable to any of the party, though, people in general and all the prominent sardars of the Maratha army welcomed the move. The knotty problem remained unresolved. Meanwhile Tarabai won over Parashuram Trimbak and Shankaraji Narayan. This indirectly compelled Ramchandrapant to accept Shivaji II as the successor to the throne. And in a way the quarrel for succession came to a peaceful end.

2. Conquest Of Paraligadh - A Hard Lesson To The Mughals

On 21st April 1700 the fort of Satara fell into the hands of

the Mughals. On 22nd April, Aurangzeb entered the fort of Satara and appointed Chatrasal Rathod as qil'edar of the fort.[1]

On the very day Satara came into the Mughal possession, Aurangzeb ordered Fath-ullah-Khan with his army to march towards Paraligadh and besiege the same without any loss of time. [2]

The fort of Parali is six miles away from Satara. It is bigger in size than the fort of Satara. Parashurampant was appointed by Rajaram to look after the territory of Parali and Satara.

The heart-breaking news of the fall of Satara soon reached Parali. The Maratha qil'edar was quick enough to grasp the situation. He had already made extensive preparations to defend the fort against a possible attack. [3]

Fath-ullah-Khan reached Parali on 21st April and ran trenches directed towards the tower under which was a small door of the fort. The Mughal officers and men worked hard and conveyed all the siege material from Satara to Parali.

On 30th April, Aurangzeb himself arrived in the outskirts of Parali. He was accompanied by Mughal generals like Ruhullah Khan, Chin Qulich Khan and Prince Aazam. Apart from these veteran generals, the Mughal army consisting of artillery, cavalry and innumerable followers, set on march towards Parali.

Chin Qulich Khan and the other Mughal sardars laid siege to the fort. Ingress and egress to the fort was closely watched. Ruhullah Khan was appointed Mir Murchal. He ran trenches and carried the guns to an elevation near the fort. Everything appeared to bring forth speedy fall of the fort and indeed it was impossible for the Marathas to hold the fort against such a formidable opposition and encirclement of the fort.

But to the ill-luck of the Mughals, nature did not favour their plans. Untimely and sudden rain poured incessantly.

Added to it was the scarcity of grain and fodder in the army camp. The misery and hardships of the Mughals became excessive, when, the Marathas in small divisions kept on attacking their lines of siege.[4] They effectively stopped the supply of food grains and forage going to the Mughal camp from the surrounding villages. They did this job so well that the Mughal army was on the brink of destruction due to utter starvation.

Many men and a large number of animals perished. But it hardly moved Aurangzeb. It did not bring any change in his plan of action. The siege continued.

Fath-ullah Khan carried the trenches under a sloping rock very broad and on one side fifteen yards high, which was situated opposite the small door of the fort. Mounting of guns on this rock would have been helpful in the speedy fall of the fort. On 4th June 1700[5] a few ladders were placed on the side which was ten yards high and the soldiers were ordered to escalade it. Fath-ullah-Khan mounted the rock by means of another ladder, secretly planted with a body of heroes, and brought under control the free activities of the roving Maratha bands in the plain and upto the fort door. 'The infidels unable to resist ran to the door and the Mughals arrived there speedily. As it was not the Khan's intention to enter the fort, he wished to mount the rock, station his men on it, and mounting a gun on it break open the door. At this time he himself went down to send up bundles of wood and straw to make a refuge for the soldiers. In the course of the fight, three or four Mughals and one Bahalia entered the fort through the small door along with the infidels; others too wanted to do the same, when suddenly, a Mughal was shot down, and a Bahalia loosing his heart, fled away in such a way as to mingle himself with others who were already in flight. Siezing the opportunity the enemy closed the door, and began to fire muskets and threw huqqas from the top of the wall, and set fire to the gunpowder which, in anticipation of such an emergency, had been hidden under ground on the

way leading to the fort. Faqir-ullah Khan, grandson of Fath-ullah-Khan and sixty or seventy others were killed, and many were wounded.' [6]

Thus the effort of Fath-ullah-Khan to take the fort failed with terrible losses to the Mughals both in manpower and prestige. But the official historian and the biographer of Aurangzeb, Saqi Mast'ad Khan records that 'this feat struck terror into the hearts of the infidels'. The claim is somewhat contrary to the facts, and sounds superficial.

Aurangzeb, realising the incapacity of his generals and army men to take the fort by use of force, allowed prince Aazam to carry out the negotiations with the Maratha qil'edar.

The Maratha garrison bravely fought the siege inspite of several odds for a period of fifty days. The qil'edar finally handed over the fort to Aurangzeb in consideration of a large amount (10 June 1700).[7] It was renamed as Naurastara.

It was indeed a hard lesson for the Mughal army in their struggle to capture the Maratha land and forts. But in reality no lesson was learnt. The Mughal army generals received orders for further march. The two sieges and the conquest of two forts, from the Marathas, had already proved to be a costly proposition to the Mughal Emperor. The losses of the Mughal army in manpower and transport animals were colossal. They could have been hardly wiped out by the illusory successes the army had achieved by conquering these forts. The financial resources were draining out. The soldiers and camp followers suffered from starvation. Their pay was in arrears. Added to these miseries, the nature also refused to cooperate with the invading army. The rain fall was heavy and untimely (early May). The army men were in no mood to undertake further conquest of the Maratha land. They were eager to withdraw to a place of greater safety, comfort and plenty. Therefore, the soldiers received orders to march to

Bhushangadh. The return march comenced on 21st June.[8] But the change only aggravated their agonies.

3. March towards Bhushangadh: Miserable plight of the Mughal army.

There were hardly any transport animals available to convey the luggage. Most of them had perished or had become feverish. The Mughal sardars burnt a lot of equipment, as they were not able to carry it with them. After suffering great hardships the Mughal army arrived on the banks of the Krishna river. The river was in full spate and it was impossible for the soldiers to cross it. Many men perished while crossing the river.[9] At last the army reached Sabitgadh on 25th July. From there Bhushangadh is at a short distance. Shortly, Aurangzeb arrived at Bhushangadh and encamped there.[10] It took thirty five days for the Mughal army to traverse a distance of fortyfive miles. Here Aurangzeb halted for a month and the preparations were being made to replenish equipment and food supplies to the army. Meanwhile, Aurangzeb issued orders to the governors of North India to enlist strong men and buy good horses and to send them to the Deccan. Two thousand horses were brought in from Kabul and two thousand mares were procured locally.[11]

Thus, after making adequate arrangements for the new campaign Aurangzeb left for Khavaspur and reached there on 30th August.[12]

Prince Aazam was sent to Khandesh to re-equip and refresh his army,[13] and some sardars were sent to their respective jagirs. Simultaneously orders were issued that, Bidar Bakht should proceed to Panhala and lay siege to it. Immediately Zulfiqar Khan and Tarbiyat Khan, with artillery-men, were despatched to Panhala.

On 1st October, while the men were fast asleep, a high flood caused by untimely rainfall, swept through the river-bed. 'Many men and animals perished, many men including

even the nobles, were left absolutely poor and naked, nearly all the tents and property were damaged.' [14]

The Marathas quickly took advantage of the situation. Hanumantrao (Nimbalkar) plundered the thana of Khatav and killed the Mughal thanedar, Ramchand. He had rendered great service to the Mughal army in the Satara region.

On 16th December, Aurangzeb left for Miraj. On 1st January 1701 he encamped at Miraj. Here materials for fighting the war were received.[15] The next target for the Mughal army was the conquest of Panhala. Emperor Aurangzeb issued orders to march in that direction.

4. Panhala Again (March 1701)

Aurangzeb wanted to capture the fort of Panhala. In the past (1692-1696) for a period of four years the two Princes, viz. Aazam and Bidar Bakht, several army generals like Firuz Jang, Lutufullah Khan, Khanazad Khan, Chin Qulich Khan and Rustum Khan, tried to wrest this fort from the Marathas. But all the military effort had turned into utter failure. The fort remained with the Marathas. Keeping these failures of the Mughal army in the past, in mind Aurangzeb planned a fresh strategy to capture this fort.

The army movement had commenced much before Aurangzeb's arrival at Miraj in December 1699.

Fifty thousand army and thirty thousand cavalry headed by Bidar Bakht had already arrived near Panhala. Zulfiqar Khan and Tarbiyat Khan were also positioned there to give full artillery support. Zulfiqar Khan had besieged its western (Konkani) gate. Aurangzeb arrived near Panhala on 9th March 1701. The total area occupied by the Mughal army by way of siege was fourteen square miles including Pavangadh, a small fort situated near Panhala. Zulfiqar Khan was given special assignment of chasing the Maratha divisions wherever they appeared.

Tarbiyat Khan dug the trenches and guns were fired at the fort. In a short time five towers of the fort were demolished but only partially.Tarbiyat Khan laid a mine large enough for three men to walk abreast and erect, which was gradually carried under the tower and outer breast-work of the fort-gate. It was a most elaborate structure in which twenty artillery men could sit. He stationed his artillery men there. From there, they fired incessantly so that the Marathas could never look down the fort. They were also adequately protected against the musket shots of the defenders. [16]

The Mughal army had intended to complete the conquest of the fort before the dreaded rainy season. But, as the region was hilly and stony, the work of laying mines consumed more time and inspite of the best efforts, the besiegers could not avoid the rainy season. Besides the natural obstacles like difficult terrain and heavy rainfall, there were also man-made obstacles which contributed to the delay in the conquest of the fort. The two generals viz. Tarbiyat Khan and Zulfiqar Khan never liked each other. Their mutual rivalry made the task more difficult. Each one of them desired to be ahead of the other. They did not hesitate in spoiling the siege work done by the other. Therefore mutual cooperation had become a distant possibility

Muhammad Murad, an officer from the lower ranks, serving the Mughal Subahdar of Gujrat, arrived at Panhala, with his five hundred troops. This was particularly appreciated by Aurangzeb, as the Subhadar of Gujrat had failed in his attempt to recruit fresh troops.[17] He was a young and fearless person. He was asked to work in coordination with Fath-ullah Khan.

Muhammad Murad Khan was made in charge of operations in the Pavangadh region. Similarly Khan Jahan, son of Haji Muhammad, was sent to Kambakhsh's army. [18]

Fath-ullah Khan was ordered to lay mines from Kambakhsh's position. Working day and night he carried

mines upto the foot of the gate in one month. Tarbiyat Khan also pushed the covered lane, further to the fort wall. But as they were jealous of each other, each one secretly thwarted the plan and work of the other. Thus they harmed the very cause of the Mughal siege. [19]

The Marathas did well. Both within the fort and outside, the garrison showed commendable strength and courage in fighting the besieging Mughal army. The Maratha divisions under Dhanaji and Ramchandrapant harried the enemy countrywide. On 23rd January, Dhanaji Jadhav appeared near the Mughal camp and a fierce battle raged all the day. Many men perished and the battle engaged all the Mughal forces in the surrounding area. The Mughals were in the trenches day and night. Two days later, Dhanaji Jadhav retreated four miles from the present post. The withdrawal was perhaps due to the news that Zulfiqar Khan, with a large army was approaching towards the Mughal camp. Zulfiqar Khan was reinforced by Hamid-ud-din-Khan. [20] The Marathas knowing fully well that a battle with the Mughal army in the open would result in severe losses to them, they retreated further down, almost twenty-two miles away from the Mughal siege camp. Another battle took place near Raibagh and yet a third one on the day following. The Mughal generals having realised that they were quite far away from the main camp, quietly retreated to the camp. [21]

Zulfiqar Khan continued his chase of Dhanaji. He attacked him and drove him twelve miles beyond Chikodi. But this hardly created any adverse effect on the Marathas. Dhanaji sent ten thousand cavalry to raid the road near Panhala. This was done evidently to cut off the grain supply and communication of the besiegers (4th February). Dhanaji himself tried to intercept some Mughal heavy guns which had reached Kararabad (Karad), while Krishna Malhar attacked the outpost of Khatav and Ramchandrapant and Dado Malhar descended into Konkan to fight Sidi Yaqut of Danda Rajpuri who was siding with the Mughals.

A little later, while Ramchandrapant was trying to convey provisions under escort of two thousand foot musketeers to beleaguered Panhala, Nusrat Jang (Zulfiqar Khan) came upon him, slew many of his men and looted most of the provisions. [22]

Inspite of the Mughal vigilance, Ramchandrapant managed to enter into the fort (24th February). Zulfiqar Khan's army, tired and exhausted, was chasing the Maratha divisions whose movements were fast and speedy like wind. On 20th April, news was spread in the Mughal camp that Ranoji Ghorpade was heading towards the camp with twenty thousand strong men. During this period his brother Bahirji was captured by the Mughals. Dhanaji moved towards Sinhgadh with a very small force and from there he despatched a Maratha division, fifteen thousand strong under Dado Malhar to ravage the territory under the Mughal officers. [23]

By the end of April, the Mughals had completed their siege work. Tarbiyat Khan posted his guns at the appropriate places of attack, and Fath-ullah Khan laid mines under the fort. All preparations to blow up the mines were completed. But the Mughal soldiers appeared hesitant and undecided. The memory of the dead, who were blown up, when the mines blew at Satara was still fresh in their minds. The sad memory of the loss of their kinsmen was not to be obliterated so soon. Their morale appeared to be at the lowest ebb.

Added to it, Trimbak, the Maratha qil'edar of Panhala, constantly fired guns and rockets and showered stones on the besieging army. The losses inflicted on the besiegers were quite heavy.

Thus the siege of Panhala continued over a long period without any success to the Mughals. Realising the grim situation, the Mughal generals were permitted to open secret talks with the Maratha qil'edar and to ascertain if the fort could be vacated in consideration of a definite amount.

Through Tarbiyat Khan, secret negotiations were opened. [24] A large sum was paid to the Maratha qil'edar and he delivered the fort on the 28th May. Thus the Mughals gained the fort after suffering huge losses in manpower [25] and war equipment. Finally they emptied their treasury to secure the fort.

5. Fall Of Maratha Forts :
The Mughal Army Operations (June-August 1701)

On the 28th May 1701, the Mughal flag was hoisted on the fort of Panhala. On the 29th May, after winding up his campaign of Panhala, Aurangzeb started for Khatav for repose. But to the ill luck of the Mughals, their camp got into the terrific grip of a cyclone. It blew away tents and sheds like paper. 'Kings and beggars had to sit down in the sun. Veiled ladies became exposed to the public gaze'. [26]

Fath-ullah Khan was given the title of 'Bahadur' for extraordinary gallantry and bravery shown by him at the time of the siege of Panhala. He was ordered to proceed in advance with his men and capture the forts of Vardhan, Nandgir, Chandan and Vandan.

With long marches and great speed he arrived at the fort of Vardhangadh. He launched attacks on all the four forts, ravaged the country, killed men and carried away the transport animals. The Maratha garrison survived the first impact of heavy Mughal fire, but as a large army of the Mughals was expected there, the garrison asked for terms of capitulation. On 6th June the fort was vacated by the Marathas. [27] The fort was renamed Sadiqgadh.

On 23rd June Aurangzeb moved four miles away from Khatav. From here, Fath-ullah Khan, together with a large army under the command of Baharamand Khan, was sent to conquer Nandgir. In a short period of twelve days, the Maratha garrison surrendered the fort. It was renamed Namgir. [28]

From here the Mughal army marched towards the fort of Chandan. The fort was besieged and in a short period the garrison surrendered the fort. From thence, the Mughal army laid siege to Vandan. It was considered to be a first rate fort. Though the Maratha garrison fought for some time, yet it was not possible to continue the fight for long. The fort was surrendered on 8th August 1701. [29] Thus in a short period of three months Aurangzeb conquered four forts of the Marathas. This indeed boosted the morale of the Mughal army. And Aurangzeb's plan and war strategy appeared to be quite successful.

6. Capture Of Khelna (Vishalgadh) By Aurangzeb

After the fall of four forts in a matter of four months, Aurangzeb decided to capture one of the most closely guarded and most difficult fort of the Marathas i.e. Vishalgadh or Khelna.

Inspite of the fact that Aurangzeb was capturing forts after forts of the Marathas, yet neither their strength nor their resistance was reduced in any way by the Mughal sword. In December 1701 they were active near Karad. Muhammad Amin Khan was ordered to chastise them. However before he could reach Karad, they moved near Malkapur. Immediately he was asked to go to Malkapur. The Marathas ravaged that territory and carried away cattle etc. But the Mughal officer gave them a battle at Kasegaon near Karad and recovered some cattles etc. [30]

By now the Maratha army had developed a new technique of harrying the Mughal forces, by their small but effective roving bands. They mostly attacked the areas, where the Mughal forces were weak or in minority. Their main objective was, besides demoralising the standing army of the Mughals, they also made it an effective operation of collecting revenue and enriching their treasury. This tactics proved extremely effective during the long siege of Khelna. They effectively prolonged the siege to their strategic advantage. The siege of Khelna stands out as a good example

of war tactics, mobility and strategy employed by the Marathas against the Mughals.

Khelna is a hilly fort. It is located in the Sahyadri range, about thirty five miles north-west of Kolhapur. Its height is 3348 feet, length 3200 feet and breadth 1040 feet. It is on the crest of Sahyadri hills. The district is wet and cool, and the hills were thickly covered with dense forest in the 17th century. The fort stands on an isolated spur jutting into Konkan and is joined to the Sahyadri range by a narrow neck of land. The easiest way of reaching it is by Amba Ghat, seven miles north of it.[31] From here Kolhapur is about thirty five miles. The fort has got main gate on the eastern side and near the gate there was a tower and a gutter. Similarly on the western side there is another gate directly facing Konkan. A passage from there leads to a small village called Sakharpa in Talkonkan. Next to this gate was a tower and a gutter. By the side of the fort wall was *rewani* (a space between the fort wall and the ditch) of the fort. There was also a hidden passage to the fort, kept for emergency use only. The Mughals did not have knowledge of this secret passage.

On 7th November 1701, the Mughal army rolled their tents at Vardhangadh (Sadiqgadh) in order to march towards Khelna. The huge monstrous Mughal army, cavalry and equally large artillery under its most prominent leaders started rolling in the direction of Malkapur, as the road to Khelna passes through Malkapur. The Mughal army rested at Malkapur for a week. At Malkapur, Santaji Pandhare attacked the Mughal outpost and destroyed it.[32] This struck a great terror in the Mughal columns advancing freely.

7. The Maratha Efforts And Resolve To Fight Back

The Maratha leaders and their dowager queen Tarabai were busy making preparations to meet the invasion and organise the people to support their cause. She wrote to Prataprao More in a most determined tone that 'Aurangzeb is making all out efforts to capture Vishalgadh. Be in readiness to launch an attack on his camp, capture his family

and recover all the lost equipment. Your brave acts would create unsurmountable difficulties for him. In the past, on several occasions, you along with your brave followers had fought the Mughal armies successfully. Once again you have to unite all the worthy Mavale-men and be on the tail of the enemy. Undoubtedly, you are one of the most loyal servants of the Chhatrapati. Our strongest enemy, Aurangzeb, must be annihilated. Your attacks on his camp would make him most uneasy. Never forget that the enemy is most treacherous, and his actions are unpredictable. Therefore if you are moving with the strong army, it would serve as a deterent threat and would also serve as a check on the military movements of the enemy. We rely upon your loyalty to the cause of Swaraj. The importance of all this need not be overemphasised. Post haste you should come and meet the Chhatrapati. You should remain at close quarters from Vishalgadh, and be available at short notice in any emergency ....'[33]

This contemporary letter, written with utmost confidence, dedication and the spirit of determined opposition, would speak volumes about the efforts and resolve of the Marathas, small and big, high and low to fight the Mughal aggression. The document clearly brings to light that the Mughal arms proved ineffective in checking the unity of the Marathas. There was no slackness on the part of the Maratha leadership in uniting the people and promoting the cause of Swaraj. Aurangzeb's physical presence at the head of a large and monstrous army was of no avail and it could hardly create terror in the rank and file of the Marathas.

The Maratha activities outside the fort were strengthened under Dhanaji Jadhav and many other Maratha sardars. Their main aim of the fight was not to allow the total concentration of the Mughal forces outside the fort. For achieving this result they had to launch attacks on the siege, and supply lines of the Mughals. This tactics had the desired effect and Aurangzeb had to send a large army under

Zulfiqar Khan to drive away the mobile Maratha divisions and also another army under Asad Khan to protect the imperial camp at Islampuri.

8. The Mughal Army Marches To Khelna

At Malkapur Aurangzeb appointed Asad-ullah-Khan, Fath-ullah Khan, Hamid-ud-din Khan, Munim Khan, Ikhlas Khan and Raja Sawai Jai Singh (grandson of Mirza Raja Jai Singh),to conduct the campaign of Vishalgadh. Bidar Bakht, who was in Gokak-Hukeri region, joined Aurangzeb. On his way he ravaged and burnt the villages. [34]

For Aurangzeb's army the road to Vishalgadh, was through the Amba pass. Eight miles from Malkapur begins the head of Amba pass. These eight miles leading to the defile presented a very difficult ground. The passage was narrow and restricted to such an extent that barely a man could walk erect, there was no question of columns passing abreast or artillery rolling down with its heavy equipment.

Fath-ullah Khan was appointed to make a road wide enough to pass the Mughal cavalry and artillery. But this was a difficult and formidable task. Besides this, off season and excessive rain further added to the difficulties already in the way. The rain created terrible slush and marching of men and animals through the slush had made it impossible to make any progress. Khafi Khan, while giving an eyewitness account of this terrible march, narrates that 'In all paths of this hilly region there are impregnable forests and dense thorny jungles through which the sun cannot peep. Lofty and stout trees abound on all sides.The branches were so interwined that even an ant could hardly pass through them. The track was difficult for footmen. The defiles and pits were deep, the rocks firmly rooted in the soil.' [35]

On 6th December 1701, the Mughal army encamped at a distance of seven miles away from Vishalgadh. 'When Fath-ullah Khan was clearing the barriers, the Maratha troops often attacked the Mughals, taking shelter of the thick

jungles and dense bushes there. Fath-ullah Khan had to make a counter attack.'[36] Thus the progress of work was not much, and the miseries of the army men were increasing in an inverse proportion. From the Maratha side orders were issued to Yashwantrao and Chandaji Kandatkar to protect the Amba pass. They were made in charge of it, and were asked to post fifty to sixty men for steady vigilance of the pass. In addition to it, they were also asked to keep men at Tirya ghat in order to guard the entry of the Mughals through it.[37]

Inspite of the best efforts on the part of the Marathas to unnerve the Mughal army, it managed to cross the Amba pass. And shortly the Mughal army had reached in the vicinity of Khelna. There are two hillocks adjacent to the fort. Both these hillocks were in the possession of the Maratha garrison. It was necessary for the Mughals to capture the same, in order to bring the fort under the effective firing range of the Mughal guns.

The Marathas had strengthened the tower walls. 'The Marathas used to attack the Mughal posts. About four to five thousand Marathas had collected near the entrance of the pass. They fired incessantly the bullets and the stones by taking shelter of the bushes ... Many Mughals were killed.'[38]

On 26th December, Asad Khan was ordered to lay siege. His vanguard under Hamid-ud-din Khan, Munim Khan and Fath-ullah Khan captured the defile. But the Marathas, who had gathered on the top of the hill, kept on firing at the Mughal soldiers. Then Fath-ullah Khan himself went to the right side of the hill and charged it and drove away the Marathas from the top. In their attempt to escape to Khelna they fell into a Mughal ambuscade.Many of them were killed by the Mughals. Next day they captured one more hillock, from where they could fire the shots into the fort of Khelna.

Thus the Mughal army reached one mile away from the fort. On 16th January Aurangzeb himself arrived in person to conduct the campaign. Khafi Khan has given a very vivid

picture of the 'seven mile march' of the Mughal army. He writes 'The imperial army suffered a lot during the journey of these seven miles. Many thousand men and equally large number of transport animals died while crossing the pass .... The Marathas used to attack from all sides, kill many and strip them off their weapons ... Almost half the equipment was lost and equal was the loss of life. It was not possible to carry the equipment. Secondly, the attacks of the enemy (the Marathas) were incessant.' [39]

9. Diversion Tactics Of The Marathas : Zulfiqar Khan Chases Them

Early February 1701, Dhanaji Jadhav appeared near Khelna and raided the Mughal camp. Aurangzeb ordered Zulfiqar Khan to chase the roving bands of the Marathas. Zulfiqar Khan chased the Maratha force towards Parenda. The Marathas did not give any fight. There were many skirmishes between the two forces near Charthan. The Marathas fought with vehemence. From thence the Mughal general entered into Berar in pursuit of the Maratha forces. Here the Maratha leaders joined hands with the local chieftains and raised a force of sixty thousand men. Zulfiqar Khan sought the help of Ali Mardan Khan, the Mughal subahdar of Elichpur, who was not only reluctant, but was also indifferent in giving any help.

From Elichpur, Zulfiqar Khan reached the territory of Nanded in Marathwada. Khudaband Khan was the faujdar of Nanded. He was mortally afraid of the Marathas. Therefore he was extremely reluctant to join the Mughal general in his operations against the Marathas. He even expressed doubts about the wisdom of Zulfiqar Khan in undertaking the campaign as in his view it was not going to be successful. From there, Zulfiqar Khan, with a meagre force of two thousand five hundred men, proceeded to Kailasgadh in Telangana. The Maratha roving bands constantly attacked the Mughal forces. Many soldiers were killed. Ram Singh Hada, who formed the rear guard of

Zulfiqar Khan's army, was the most miserable man in the army. Very often the rear guard which he commanded was the target of the enemy's attack. Several small battles and encounters took place and both the sides suffered heavy casualties.

A major battle took place on the banks of the river Banganga. Many men were killed. The fighting continued for the whole day. At long last, with the fall of the night, the fighting ceased. The Marathas, taking advantage of the darkness of the night, disappeared towards some unknown place. Zulfiqar Khan moved to a small village called Maloni in anticipation of a Maratha force. But after some time he returned to Nanded.

Thus in a period of eight months, Zulfiqar Khan, with his two lieutenants Ram Singh and Rao Dalpat, fought nineteen small and big battles and traversed the country over four thousand miles. [40]

In the words of Bhimsen, a contemporary historian 'This year much forced marching was done. All the troops became worn out and distracted in mind ... The enemy were kept in rapid movements for eight successive months ... The horses of the imperialists were so worn out as to be unable to walk and many of our troopers had to march on foot ... The elephants became lame and weak ... I too lost my horses and camels ...' [41]

10. Military Preparations And The Siege Of Khelna

Immediately after reaching the environs of Khelna, Aurangzeb ordered prince Bidar Bakht to proceed towards Panhala, in order to guard that fort against a possible attack of the Marathas and also keep open the supply line to Khelna, which was frequently intercepted by the Marathas. Muhammad Amin Khan was ordered to descend into low lands of Konkan by way of Amba pass. He was also made responsible for the supply of adequate provisions to the army engaged in the siege. He ravaged the country, burnt

many houses and killed many men. And a similar feat of ravaging the countryside and of killing men was also performed by Tarbiyat Khan. [42]

The Marathas strongly resisted the Mughal army commander's activities in the Konkan, particularly Khandoji Karajakar [43] and Dhondo Bhaskar Desh Kulkarni, [44] both the Maratha sardars rendered necessary help to their brethern against all possible odds. They burnt the Mughal outposts and reassured their countrymen.

Aurangzeb, after reaching the vicinity of Khelna, made extensive arrangements to lay siege to the fort. He also issued instructions to guard the siege line from surprise attacks of the Maratha roving bands. In fact the arrangements made by Aurangzeb at Khelna, provides an excellent example of his generalship, war strategy, deployment of forces and effective use of the war material and resources at his disposal. In order to achieve the best results, he had employed a vast network of spies, who often used to enter into the fort and report back about the condition of the besieged Marathas. It is through these reports that we get a penetrating vision which provides a very close picture of the siege and the strategy.

It was humanly impossible for Aurangzeb to lay siege to the fort from all sides, as the area occupied by the fort had been extremely large, besides being surrounded by deep valleys and jungles. Therefore he divided the whole region in five sections from Prabhavali to the western gate of the fort which leads a passage to Sakharpa in Talkonkan. These sections were later on converted into siege lines of each commander positioned to invest the fort.

(1) Asad Khan with the imperial army under the direct command of Aurangzeb was posted to the south-east of the fort near Gajapur. Tarbiyat Khan, the artillery commander, was asked to assist Asad Khan and was positioned near him. (2) Next to Asad Khan was Fath-ullah Khan opposite the main gate or the eastern gate of the fort. He was to keep

watch on the entire valley to the north of the fort. (3) Next to Fath-ullah Khan's siege line were the troops of Muhammad Amin Khan, towards the north-west of the fort near a hillock called Katar Khelna. His troops reached this place from Amba ghat after crossing the valley and high hill of Machal (the hill of Katar Khelna is next to Machal). He was assisted by one thousand troops commanded by Sidi Yaqut Khan and sent by Sidi Ambar. (4) Next to Muhammad Amin Khan was the army of Raja (Sawai) Jai Singh under the command of his minister Budh Singh. He had positioned his troops to the west of the fort opposite the Konkani gate and from this place there was a direct road to Talkonkan and Sakharpa. (5) To the south-west of the fort was the camp of prince Bidar Bakhat. His soldiers were expected to guard the southern side of the fort in the direction of Prabhavali, a hilly region infested with dense jungles. Bidar Bakht was appointed overall commander of the siege.

The Siege Described

There were in all five different siege lines. Out of these five siege lines, information about the siege line of Asad Khan is not available.

Siege Line Of Fath-ullah Khan:

The troops under Fath-ullah Khan were positioned opposite the main gate or the eastern gate of the fort. He planted the guns and boldly carried the covered lane upto the ditch situated before the *rewani* of the fort. The Mughal soldiers carrying out the siege work were completely exposed to the enemy fire. They suffered great losses in dead and wounded. There was shortage of unskilled labour as none wanted to risk his life. Therefore, Fath-ullah Khan induced new labour force to undertake the digging work by paying them gold muhars.[45] Thus the Mughal general persisted in his work inspite of heavy losses and high cost of labour. The condition of the Mughal army had become miserable. The rate of casualties had so increased that in the words of Saqi Must'ad Khan 'The lives of friends and foes alike were not worth purchasing at half a grain of barley.'[46]

Inspite of the best Mughal efforts, the Marathas destroyed ladders which had been raised from the midst of the pit to the level ground under the fort gate. But Fath-ullah Khan made more ladders and rafts and reached the waist of the tower and could advance no further. Inspite of a severe bombardment by the two guns Sher-Dahan and Karak-bijli, which were capable of spliting hills, only a few stones were loosened from the tower.[47]

On 26th March, Fath-ullah Khan erected a raft in front of the fort. Eight persons in the siege line were wounded. Next day one more raft was erected. The Marathas fired bullets and threw stones continuously on the siege line. As a result of it, the siege work had to be abandoned.Three days later,he then raised a parapet wall in front of the gutter of the fort. On 1st April, he erected one more raft. During this work, six men were wounded. On 3rd April, the Marathas from within the fort threw packs of grass ablaze on the siege line. They also constantly fired guns and threw stones on Fath-ullah Khan's men. As a result of this one person was killed and ten were wounded. On 6th April the Marathas fired gun shots at the siege line. Ruhullah Khan and Hamid-ud-din Khan arrived in the siege line, probably to find out the progress of Fath-ullah Khan. Next day, after having consultations with Fath-ullah Khan, they returned to Aurangzeb. But by 12th April,Hamid-ud-din Khan again returned to the siege line. The Marathas intensified their stone throwing and let ablaze the siege line. Fath-ullah Khan employed men to put off fire by water. This operation continued for the next two or three days. Five men from the siege line were wounded. Thus his siege progressed from bad to worse. On 16th April, Sidi Ambar and Hamid-ud-din Khan arrived at the siege line. Two persons in the siege line were wounded.

The Marathas held their ground firmly. They continuously fired *matwalas* weighing hundred maunds and two hundred maunds. They made night attacks and destroyed much of the siege work of the Mughals and killed many. On 23rd April,

Fath-ullah Khan himself was struck down by a stone, thrown by the Marathas. He was thrown deep into the valley. Luckily he was saved but was in the bed for the next three weeks.[48] By about 16th May, he recovered well and again fired guns at the tower of the fort and destroyed a part of the tower. According to the news-report, he appeared confident of destroying the tower in another ten to fifteen days time. But nothing seems to have happened. Everything appeared quiet on this front. In the meantime prince Bidar Bakht had initiated peace talks.

Siege Line Of Muhammad Amin Khan

Muhammad Amin Khan crossed the hill of Machal and camped near Katar Khelna towards the western side of the fort and in the Talkonkan region. Along with him were one thousand men commanded by Sidi Yaqut Khan sent by Sidi Ambar.

On 16th February 1702, his army crossed ten to twelve yards distance of the perimeter wall of Katar Khelna. On 14th March,Sidi Yaqut Khan was warned to remain alert lest Parshurampant, the Maratha qil'edar, might escape. On the same day Muhammad Amin Khan, accompanied by Jamshid Khan, Ma'mur Khan and many others, gave a battle to the Marathas on Katar Khelna. Many men of the Marathas were killed and wounded. Though the Marathas put up a brave resistance, yet the Mughals captured the old and new wall of the Katar Khelna. He established a bazar and alighted his men over there. During the fight, he lost a few men in killed and nearly one hundred were wounded.[49] Subsequently he fell sick and there was hardly any activity worth the note on this front till the conquest of the fort.

Siege Line Of Raja Jai Singh [50]

The siege commander was Budh Singh, the minister of Raja Jai Singh. His troops were positioned in front of the Konkani gate. On 16th February,Budh Singh complained that his stock of gun powder had depleted considerably. The Marathas were firing bullets and throwing stones

continuously. They were reported of having prepared a hidden lane as an emergency measure to stop the advancing Mughal troops. On 1st March, Raja Jai Singh and Budh Singh inspected the siege line. The Maratha soldiers fired at them. Budh Singh clashed with them and established three posts outside the fort. About six Rajput soldiers were wounded. Next day, Budh Singh attacked a post of the Marathas. The Marathas fought bravely. In the meantime, he sent Bhiti Singh along with fifty cavalrymen and twentyfive infantrymen in the valley, in order to stop the approach of the Marathas through the valley. There was an exchange of fire. About ten Rajput soldiers were wounded and one succumbed to death.

On the night of 8th March, Budh Singh advanced the siege line by fifty yards and established a post. The Marathas attacked and wounded two men from the siege. On 10th March,the Marathas threw stones from the fort. Bakht Singh was killed. Next day,Tegh Singh, a servant of Raja Jai Singh, also lost his life.

By the middle of March,Raja Jai Singh having had the wind of the situation, got in touch with Parashurampant, the Maratha commander. On 21st March an exchange of letters through the spies took place. This was motivated by the sole purpose of securing the fort by bribing the qil'edar. On 24th March at night, he advanced by ten yards. Again on 27th March,Budh Singh advanced by another twelve yards. He erected five rafts. Three men were injured due to stone hit and bullets. The progress of laying mines was stopped as a big black stone in front of the gutter of the fort caused obstruction. The Rajputs took about twenty days to remove the obstacle. Even then the progress was considerably slow, due to stiff resistance of the Marathas. On 16th April,Budh Singh erected another three rafts. But by about 24th April, the Marathas fired guns from the fort and destroyed twenty one rafts and wounded twenty men. Then there was a period of lull in the siege line. Probably because prince Bidar Bakht

was negotiating talks with the commander of the fort. On 16th May, Budh Singh vehemently opposed any negotiations with the Marathas, as the Marathas had killed a large number of men of Raja Jai Singh. Therefore he preferred a battle to the last. But his say did not prevail and prince Bidar Bakht negotiated the talks with Parashurampant. Subsequent to this, till the end of the siege, this front remained quiet.

Siege Line Of Prince Bidar Bakht

On 4th March Bidar Bakht was recalled from Panhala and was ordered to lay siege to south west side of the fort. His siege line was next to Raja Jai Singh. Raja Jai Singh's troops were to assist him.[51] On 9th March Bidar Bakht, along with Raja Jai Singh and Jamshid Khan, inspected the siege line of Raja Jai Singh. On 11th March the gun Nasseri was conveyed to his siege line. On 15th March three persons sent by Sarwar Khan went inside the fort.

This might have been probably to illicit information about the happenings in the fort. On 17th March a spy called Prabha was sent to the fort in order to collect the intelligence of the enemy. He went inside the fort along with some brahmins and stayed inside the fort for fifteen days. He, perhaps, had a real piercing look at the affairs of the fort, and made out his report based on factual information. Indeed his report revealed many interesting things about the besieged. He wrote in his report that 'Parashurampant (often called Parsa *shaqi* in the news reports) was inside the fort. He had just received the information about the death of his father. Therefore, he had shaved his head and beared clean. The stock of gunpowder had depleted in the fort.' Further he had gathered the information that there were two secret hill passages to the fort, one running from the siege line of Fath-ullah Khan and the other towards Prabhavali, but the Mughals did not know about the existence of the same.

The Marathas kept one thousand cavalrymen ever ready to plunge into action. Another force consisting of one thousand

five hundred men was kept in reserve in order to meet any emergency. This force was an eye soar to the Mughals. The Maratha qil'edar Parshurampant directly commanded it. In the past these troopers had caused immense damage to the besieging Mughals. Aurangzeb had issued specific orders to destroy this force. His report further adds that Dhanaji Jadhav was expected to reach in the vicinity of the fort and rescue the besieged. Another force under Ranoji Ghorpade was being sent by Shivaji II. The qil'edar also received strict instructions to continue the fighting and not to give up the fort. He was also asked to improve the defence of the fort. Parashurampant was adequately equipped with arms and ammunition by Bas Prabhu Desai of Hukeri. [52]

11. Bidar Bakht's Efforts To Take The Fort By Negotiations

From December till the middle of March the siege had dragged on. Military efforts from all the five fronts to take the fort by force, did not yield any results. The Maratha opposition was stiff and the Mughal soldiers had become equally slack. The besieging Mughals could not intercept the line of communication of the besieged Marathas with the outside world. The Prince had definite knowledge of all this. He was also not very hopeful about successful outcome of the siege. He had consultations with Aurangzeb about the same. Therefore with the permission of the Emperor, he headed the mission of carrying out negotiations with the Maratha qil'edar. He was hopeful that Parashurampant would respond to his call. On 17th March he sent one brahmin and ten spies inside the fort. They were to have an audience with the qil'edar. They conveyed to the Prince, that Parashurampant was inclined and willing to hand over the fort to the Mughals. In return he expected an amount of rupees three lacs in cash and a mansab for his son and no other personal gains for himself. These men who had brought the message, were directed to see Sarfaraz Khan. The Khan appears to be a very trusted lieutenant of Aurangzeb as the negotiations were mostly carried through

him. It took ten days for the Prince to accept the terms of the Marathas. On 28th March the same party along with Sarafraz Khan's servant went inside the fort at night by way of the siege line of Raja Jai Singh. At this time a prominent Maratha named Hanvant (Hanumant) gumasta, Sardeshmukh of Muzffarabad and zamindar of Rajapur played a leading part in successfully negotiating the talks. In the month of March he frequently visited the fort. Both the Marathas and the Mughals trusted him equally.

On 4th April, Sarfaraz Khan conveyed to Bidar Bakht that Parashurampant was amenable to hand over the fort. Prior to this he wanted an assurance by the Prince that his demands would be fulfilled. Accordingly he sent his representatives (vakils) to Bidar Bakht.

Although, the peace talks were taking some definite shape yet, leaders on both the sides did not show any slackness in their military efforts. On 11th April, Ramchandrapant ordered Dhanaji Jadhav to hasten the help of the besieged. The Prince, on his part tightened up all the siege lines and asked the Mughal commanders to keep a close watch on the ingress and egress of the Marathas. But this was not sufficient to meet the need of the hour. He was constantly being reminded about the fast approaching rainy season, and the calamities that would follow the heavy and incessant rains in that region. He warned Sarfaraz Khan accordingly. The progress of the talks was expedited. Hanumant Gumasta was despatched to bring back the representatives of Parashurampant and finalise the talks, before the onset of the dreaded mansoon.

On 11th April, Shankara and Gopal, the two representatives of the Maratha qil'edar, accompanied by Hanumant, arrived at the siege line of Raja Jai Singh. They stayed with Hanumant. On the same day a certain Rama Pandit was sent to the fort. On 10th April, Bidar Bakht invited Ruhullah Khan and Sarafraz Khan for some secret talks.

On 17th April, Naroji Ghorpade with five thousand cavalrymen, was active in Madha, a place five miles away from Panhala fort. Anup Singh, brother of Rawat Mal, qil'edar of the Panhala and Khan Alam with the imperial men hastened to chastise them. Khwaja Khan was sent to assist him. On 18th April, Rawat Mal sent his armed men to the siege line of the Prince for the defence of the noncombatants *(bungah)*. Bidar Bakht visited the siege line. On 24th April he inspected the arrangements of the gunners and warned Jamshid Khan and Ma'mur Khan to keep planks, arrows and bows ready for action. The next day, a small force of the Marathas consisting of about fifty to sixty men arrived near the siege line. Budh Singh hastened to give fight. Two men of Raja Jai Singh were wounded.

In the meantime, the vakils of Parashurampant were asked to see Sarafraz Khan with regard to the demands of their master. But the talks were not finalised. Prince Bidar Bakht became frustrated about the outcome of the talks. On 26th April, the Prince desperately spoke to Hanumant Gumasta, the chief negotiator, 'They are not handing over the fort. I will incur the wrath of the Emperor'. Hanumant replied 'I am helpless. I have no army along with me. Their demands must be accepted.' He said 'Very well, I will find out their weakness ... go away. I will see how long the fort will remain like this.' From this it appears that the terms of Parashurampant were very stiff.

In the meantime, Parashurampant conveyed to Aurangzeb through a letter that the Emperor should give a written assurance to the Marathas that after the fort of Khelna was handed over to the Mughals, he would not attempt to capture their other forts. Further a sum of three lacs rupees be paid to him in advance and the garrison was to be allowed to go unmolested.[53]

About the same time, Bidar Bakht received a letter from Parashurampant. Here again he clearly stated that 'The Emperor is opposing (us) and if for certain he is going to kill

us, then why should we not go for a worthless battle. Finally without the acceptance of the demands, nothing could be done. The broth is in the pot. On account of this I wish to die in the battle. But if he pays attention and accepts the demands; the fort is ready (for handing over). And if he is opposing and not accepting the demands, then I will fight to the best of my capabilities.' The Prince sent the letter to Asad Khan for securing approval from Aurangzeb. These two letters are very eloquent about the resolve and determination of the Marathas to fight back vehemently.

On 27th April, Bidar Bakht sent a reply to Parashurampant's letter. On 1st May he reviewed the siege line from Katar Khelna and ordered Ruhullah Khan to warn the men to capture the *rewani* of the fort. Immediately Jamshid Khan, Mansur Khan, I'tmad Khan, Raja Jai Singh and others were summoned by him and were ordered to remain in readiness for an attack. In the afternoon the men of Raja Jai Singh placed ladders on the wall of the *rewani*. A small skirmish with the defenders took place and his men captured the *rewani*. Later on the other Mughal soldiers joined him. The Marathas lost about seventy men, and two to three hundred were wounded. Many men of Raja Jai Singh and an equal number of men from Bidar Bakht's army were also killed and wounded. The Mughals planted on the *rewani* of the fort their flag as a mark of victory. The Prince was trying to build up military pressure over the Maratha qil'edar, so that the qil'edar would lower his terms. But it had a totally different effect. The advance of the Mughals was firmly checked at the *rewani* of the fort. Parashurampant with a strong force of two thousand men, personally stood in readiness at the western gate of the fort. But the Mughals continued their attack.

On 9th May, Daulat Khan, was killed by stone-hit, while he was carrying the ladders. In the afternoon Bidar Bakht, along with Ruhullah Khan, Raja Jai Singh and Khan Alam, inspected the siege line. One raft was burnt as a result

of the fire caused by the Marathas.

On 11th May a battle took place near the *rewani* of the fort. The Marathas resisted firmly. They fired musket shots, arrows and threw stones. Parashurampant personally supervised the operation. The Mughal soldiers destroyed the hidden lane prepared by the Marathas near the *rewani.* About two to three hundred Mughal soldiers were wounded and most of them died. Still,Bidar Bakht pressed his men to capture the fort. On 12th May he ordered the artillery men to batter the gate of the fort. As a result of it, a small part of the fort wall near the gate was damaged. But there was no further progress, neither the fort wall could be broken nor the determination of the Marathas to resist could be shattered.

12. Aurangzeb Finally Accepts The Demands Of The Marathas

However, the secret talks with the Maratha commander made some progress. On 13th May, Tima a zamindar of Rajapur and Rayaji Kulkarni of Sakharpa were selected to conduct the negotiations. They came to the fort. On the same day Hanumant returned to Bidar Bakht and informed him about the demands of the commander. On 15th May, Hanumant and Rayaji met Bidar Bakht twice, probably to convey a final word from him to Parashurampant. They soon went to the fort.

On 16th May, a message was duly conveyed through Hanumant and Rayaji to Parashurampant. But the Maratha commander did not care for such threats, as he knew well that it was beyond the capability of the Mughals to capture the fort or kill him. Hanumant returned on the same day to Bidar Bakht empty handed.

Thus the negotiations appeared to be in doldrums. On 21st May,Bidar Bakht inspected the siege line. On 25th May,he enquired about the progress of the talks with Parashurampant. Suddenly the events took a different turn.

Aurangzeb perhaps reconciled with the situation, and issued fresh orders giving consent to the terms of capitulation proposed by the Marathas. Tima sent a letter to him in the fort. Govind, Shankra and three other persons came to Tima from the fort, probably with a message from Parashurampant. Subsequently on 26th May, Shakur Khan and Budh Singh informed Tima that Aurangzeb had agreed to spare the life of Parashurampant and had conceeded to the demands of the qil'edar. Ruhullah Khan who used to convey all these talks to Aurangzeb, was away. Therefore Shakur Khan directed Tima to see Fazail Khan.

He was asked to carry the flag of Bidar Bakht to the fort. But he refused to do so as Parashurampant had directed him to conduct the affairs through Ruhullah Khan only and not through Fazail Khan. However, Ruhullah Khan arrived there the next day. He had brought with him a copy of the farman from the Emperor, sparing the life of Parashurampant and accepting all the demands of the Marathas.

13. The Mughal Flag Hoisted On Khelna

Thus finally Aurangzeb conceded to the Marathas all their demands in order to get the fort. He also gave a sum of two lacs of rupees to the qil'edar.[54] Mir Ataullah, accompanied by Govind and Hanumant with a copy of farman, went to the fort. Ghansyam Rao an imperial mansabdar, accompanied them in order to conduct the ceremony with all the imperial dignity and to receive the keys of the fort from Parashurampant.

On 2nd June,Shankra and Govind went inside the fort. On 3rd June, Parashurampant was asked to plant the flag of Bidar Bakht on the fort, but he sent back a reply that he would do so on Thursday i.e. 4th June.

On 5th June,Bidar Bakht received a message from Shaikh Abdus Salam, who had gone inside the fort, saying 'Parsa had called me in the morning and conveyed that he along

with his men and material were ready to go out of the fort. He had no other work. He had asked me to convey this to you. Then I asked him by which way he would go out. He replied that he would go out by Konkani gate towards Prabhavali or any other way as he would have liked.'

It appears that he did not vacate the fort on 5th June. On 6th June, we learn through the reports of the spies that the road towards Konkani gate was being repaired for the garrison to go out. And on the same date in the morning Parashurampant went out by way of wicket gate of the fort along with forty men. He left towards Prabhavali. [55]

Thus after an incessant struggle of about six months (26th December 1701-6th June 1702) and after having suffered innumerable hardships, having lost six thousand mansabdars, having spent collosal amount on siege lines and finally having emptied the treasury, then alone could Aurangzeb lay his hands over the most impregnable fort of the Marathas. [56] As was usually the practice of Aurangzeb, the fort was renamed as Sakhkharlana (God made hell subject to) and his sardars were lavishly rewarded. Zabit Khan was appointed qil'edar of Khelna. [57]

At long last the campaign of Vishalgadh was over. The Emperor was the victor. He raised his head high with great pride to cast a glance at the Mughal flag, flying almost over the clouds. In his plan of the conquest of the Maratha forts, it was a mile stone. By now he was the master of strong forts like Panhala, Parli, Satara and many others. His ambition to humble the Marathas and the Deccani states alike, was almost fulfilled. The two rival Muslim states of Bijapur and Golkonda were already vanquished. The court historians, have rightly showered upon him unequalled praise on account of these marvellous achievements. And yet the victor in the hour of great triumph was desponding. He was ill at ease. Perhaps the atmosphere in general, and for the Mughal army in particular, was filled with gloom and despair. The hardships they had suffered during the

conquest, were indeed unparalleled. Therefore their faces could hardly blossom with the joy of victory. The sorrow of the loss of their kith and kin had still not diminished. The wounds were yet to heal, and the scars of the battle were still to be forgotten. The fright of the Marathas ever haunted them. They were convinced that the success was more illusory than real.

The campaign of Vishalgadh brought home two points to the victor. Firstly, it became clear that the Marathas could not be humbled inspite of the Mughals having best generals,a large army, a big cavalry and an effective artillery. Secondly, during this campaign it was observed that the field after field was red with blood and its colour certainly did not distinguish between a Hindu and a Muslim. In each village and in every small place the Marathas made a stand. Many villages had become desolate. The dwellings were doomed. The crash of cannon balls, the explosion of shells, the storm of bullets speedily did its work. In the deep defiles of the mountain ranges so also in the thick of jungles, horsemen and footmen met hand to hand in the desparate fight. Fields of grain were trampled in the mire. Many thousand lives were consumed by the blazing flames of war which swept on mercilessly and unrelentingly. The scenes were heart rending. What a price, oh victory! And yet all this hardly detered Aurangzeb, the Mughal Emperor, the Victor. No lesson was learnt from the devastations. He relentlessly pursued his path.

The devastation was utter ruin and yet the Marathas did not bow before it. Nothing seemed to cause fear in them. They were on their way to establish their superiority over their rival army. The official reports made by the Mughal spies who often visited the fort, are a good testimony to the determination and resolve of the Marathas to fight back the aggression. To them it was a part of war strategy, first to contest the Mughal arms and then to give up the fort for a bargain price. This avoided possible losses in manpower in

an open fight, which they could have ill afforded. It is difficult to subscribe to the view that a shrewed and diplomatic person of Aurangzeb's strature did not have the feel and grasp of the above situation. His subsequent actions compell us to believe that he acted more on impulse than on anything else. We notice that within three days of taking the fort, he ordered a march towards Bahadurgadh in Ahmadnagar district.

14. March To Bahadurgadh (Pedgaon)

The Mughal army started retreating from Khelna, with all the haste, in order to escape the terrible mansoon of the Konkan tract. They had planned to cross the dreaded Amba pass at the earliest. But to their misfortune, the mansoon had set in by the time they had crossed a couple of miles from Khelna towards Amba ghat, It was covered with slush and the task of crossing the Amba ghat looked more dreadful than ever. Khafi Khan [58] and Saqi Must'ad Khan, who had accompanied the Mughal army, have given a very good descriptive account of the event. 'The camels refused to set foot on this path. The elephants, in a dazed condition, tried to carry the loads, ... but sank into the mud like donkeys. Porters carried on their heads the property and baggage of all the men.' [59]

'The nullah (a small stream of water) in the way permitted the imperial cortege to pass and then opened its mouth to devour the people .... whosoever was drowned was drowned, and he whom fate saved .... in this evil time grain sold at a rupee a seer, fodder and firewood appeared only by mistake. The helpless people died from heavy rain ....' [60] But Aurangzeb was unmindful of all this. He frequently said, in the words of Saqi Must'ad Khan, 'A little cloud is showering rain, a little wind is blowing, why then have the people been seized with despair?' [61]

The first halt of the retreating army was at Malkapur on 20th June. From there it reached Panhala on 17th July. Thus the army could cross only thirty miles in thirtyeight days.

After a halt of five days at Panhala, it arrived at Vadgaon by way of Banasgaon-Vathar.'The march was resumed and it crossed the Krishna river and arrived at Miraj on 25th September. From there it arrived at Daflapur on 5th October by way of Malgaon-Dhulgaon. Next place to arrive at for the army was Akluj on 24th October by way of Pratappur, Jujharpur, Najra (on the Man river), Yaqutpur, Vaki, Bhalvani and Velapur. The army halted at Akluj for three days and then resumed the march. It arrived at Pedgaon on 13th November by way of Babulgaon, Indapur, Kalthan, Warkuti and Palasdev.'[62]

It took one hundred and fifty six days for the Mughal army to reach Bahadurgadh (Pedgaon) in Ahmadnagar district. The Mughal army suffered huge losses in respect of manpower, material and transport animals during this march. By the time it reached the destination (Pedgaon) it found itself completely exhausted and exasperated.

At Pedgaon, the Mughal army gave a sigh of relief. Here it reposed and refreshed itself.

After the fateful march from Khelna to Pedgaon the Mughal army intended to repose there, but the Marathas would not let them do so. The elephants of the Mughal army were away in the fields for grazing. The Marathas managed to carry them away. Immediately, a famous Mughal general, Muhammad Amin Khan Bahadur, was ordered to recover the same from the Marathas. Muhammad Amin Khan went in persuit of them and attacked. The Marathas defeated the Mughal general, got hold of his elephants, horses and the other baggage also. As if this was not enough, he was stripped of his clothes and was sent back without any clothes almost in a naked and desperate condition. [63]

The army had not still recovered from the dreadful march from Khelna to Pedgaon, their wounds were yet to be healed, and their woes were yet to be forgotten with the past, when Aurangzeb issued orders for the conquest of Sinhgadh.

Barely eighteen days had passed since the Mughal army had arrived at this place, again it had to dismantle the tents and march hopelessly. Prince Bidar Bakht was sent to Aurangabad as Viceroy. The Mughal army left Pedgaon on 3rd December, and arrived at Kondana on 27th December.[64]

15. Capture Of Sinhgadh

Sinhgadh was an important fort about eighteen miles from Poona. It served as a good observation post and strategically it was important, as it controlled the movements towards Rajgadh and Torna, two strongholds of the Marathas. Rajaram had passed away at Sinhgadh; since then the security of the fort was tightened up. Many families of the Maratha noblemen were also sheltered there. Therefore, Aurangzeb rightly thought of capturing this fort; from here he proceeded towards the conquest of Rajgadh and Torna.

The orders to lay siege to the fort were issued. Under Tarbiyat Khan, the Mir Atish, the army started its siege work of digging trenches, laying mines and carrying the guns to a nearby hillock from where they could fortify the garrison.

The Marathas by now had become quite familiar with the technique of the Mughal commanders of laying siege and were not at all afraid of it. They defended Sinhgadh very strongly. Though they were aware that during last one year, Aurangzeb had taken several of their forts, yet they did not lack in their resolve and defence efforts. It did not bring any despair to them. The two Maratha generals, Balaji Vishwanath, the Sarsubahdar of Poona and later the first Peshwa of Shahu, and Dhanaji Jadhav, the most experienced commander-in-chief of the Maratha army, worked with untiring energy and zeal. They helped the besieged Maratha garrison in all possible ways. Balaji Vishwanath is very eloquent about it in one of his letters written to Kashi Vishwanath and Abaji Purandare. 'Rush post haste on receipt of this despatch. An urgent and important task awaits you. Cause no delay. Send two and half maunds of gunpowder to the garrison (Sinhgadh). The

delay and non-supply would be fatal. You have no right to live in the state, if these are not rendered in time. Strive hard and defeat the enemy.' [65]

Thus all the preparations to give a determined fight were afoot. The siege dragged on for three months. The Mughals were quite aware that if the siege would prolong by another two months, then they would be required to pay very dearly because of the onset of dreadful mansoon. Therefore they had no option but to make a bargain offer to the Maratha qil'edar. Finally, Tarbiyat Khan managed the affairs. He successfully negotiated with the Maratha qil'edar and paid a sum of fifty thousand rupees to him through Gomaji Vishwanath Purandare. [66] On 8th April, [67] the Mughal flag was hoisted on Sinhgadh and the Marathas quietly withdrew. The fort was renamed Bakhshinda-Bakhsh (Giver's Gift).

16. Chastising The Marathas-
A Wild Goose Chase For The Mughals

Zulfiqar Khan and Asad Khan, the son and father, both were stationed at Islampuri since their return from Jinji in 1699. Here they were assigned the duty of protecting the Mughal camp, against surprise attacks of the roving Maratha bands. In addition to this, Zulfiqar Khan was given a special mission of chastising the Marathas in all possible directions and in any region, near or distant. As a good general and a true military commander, he followed the Maratha divisions from Islampuri on the bank of the Bhima upto Nanded on the banks of the Godavari, including the regions of Marathwada, Western Maharashtra, Berar and parts of Telangana. In a period of eight months, he fought nineteen battles, travelled six thousand miles, and did not allow any repose to himself or his comrades in arms. Ever he hoped to destroy the 'robbers' once for all, but could never achieve this object so dear to his heart. The results of all these battles were quite disappointing. He could not successfully overpower the Marathas during this period. His strategy and tactics which brought him victories against the

Marathas at Raigadh and Jinji, hardly yielded any fruitful results in his current mission. The Maratha technique of warfare could not be matched. The victorious general was seen many a time being on defensive rather than offensive. This happened repeatedly till June 1702.

The history of later years is also not very different than that of the past, nor were the results by any chance dissimilar. Bhimsen, who was an eye witness to the events, has presented a very graphic picture of these happenings. It is through his accounts that we come to know about the miserable plight of Zulfiqar Khan and his soldiers, and the effectiveness of the technique employed by the Marathas.

After June 1702, Zulfiqar Khan was again on the tale of Dhanaji Jadhav. At this time Dhanaji was at Sinhgadh. During the rainy season, Zulfiqar Khan halted at Purandhar fort. From Purandhar he was ordered to go to Aurangabad territory on the same mission. A few days prior to his departure, on account of the death of Baharamand Khan, Zulfiqar Khan was appointed to the post of Mir Bakhshi.

During December Dhanaji was active near Miraj. Zulfiqar Khan arrived there. Hardly had he encamped, when the intelligence was received that the Marathas had attacked Chin Qulich Khan, sixteen miles off Bijapur on the banks of the Krishna. Zulfiqar Khan went there and repulsed the attacking Marathas. From there Dhanaji moved towards Gulbarga region. In addition to Zulfiqar Khan, Firuz Jang, father of Chin Qulich Khan, was also ordered to proceed to the rescue of his son. But he was mortally afraid of Dhanaji and his roving bands. He simply evaded the orders. The Mughal spies promptly reported the matter to the Emperor and Firuz Jang was recalled from Gulbarga.

In the beginning of 1703, the news of the Marathas crossing the river Narmada and ravaging the territory upto Ujjain was received by Aurangzeb. As usual, Zulfiqar Khan along with Rao Dalpat Bundela, who was recently promoted to the mansab of three thousand, hastened to meet the

challenge of the Marathas. But he returned without any fruitful gains.

Soon the Marathas marched towards Burhanpur and laid siege to it. Prince Bidar Bakht despatched Raja Jai Singh and Rustum Khan Dakhani against the Marathas. Even Zulfiqar Khan also marched in that direction. On receiving the news of large scale movement of the Mughal armies, the Marathas abandoned the siege and entered into Berar. In order to meet this challenge, Prince Bidar Bakht appointed Rustum Khan Dakhani and Ali Mardan Khan as his deputies at Berar and Burhanpur respectively.

In the meantime, the son of Dhanaji Jadhav laid siege to Sultanpur and Nandurbar. Zulfiqar Khan turned in that direction. On his way he received information of the Marathas having moved towards Baglan, chasing them, Zulfiqar Khan arrived at Abula (?). [68] As he reached that place, he received information about the movement of Dhanaji's son marching towards the imperial camp in the Poona region. With long and forced marches he arrived at Shirval near Poona and drove away the Marathas.

After April-May 1703, i.e. after the fall of Sinhgadh, the Marathas mustered an army of thirty thousand strong men in Khandesh. Raja Gopal Singh Chandravat was ordered to proceed to that region and chastise the Marathas. Zulfiqar Khan also mobilised some of his divisions to Khandesh. He himself went to Burhanpur. Swiftly the Marathas moved towards Berar. From thence Zulfiqar Khan turned towards Ahmadnagar and gave up the chase.

In Berar, Rustum Khan Dakhani, the deputy of Bidar Bakht, marched out of Elichpur with a large army to attack the Marathas. A fierce battle was fought and he was made captive by the Marathas. He secured his release after paying a huge amount to the Marathas. [69]

Thus during one year's period from June 1702 to May 1703, when the Mughal armies were busy in capturing the strong holds of the Marathas in the Sahyadri ranges, the

Maratha roving bands launched an aggressive campaign in the other territories under the Mughals. With their swift and speedy movements, they took the Mughal officers by surprise. Zulfiqar Khan, with his strong army chased them in far off regions like Khandesh, Berar, Burhanpur and across the Narmada river. The Maratha divisions had now become very strong. They were successfully escaping ever chasing Mughal armies. In fact, for the Mughals the job of chastising the Marathas was something like a wild goose chase.

Aurangzeb's Efforts To Reconcile With The Marathas Fail

After the capture of Sinhgadh in April 1703, Aurangzeb reviewed the prevailing political situation. He realised, contrary to his expectations, that the Marathas were not at all humbled. In fact, day by day their strength and opposition was on the increase. The war effort so far had cost him considerably both in manpower and wealth. The reports reaching him from Zulfiqar Khan and Prince Bidar Bakht were also none too encouraging. At this stage he thought that the Marathas could be won over by mutual negotiations. This was perhaps the wiser course to adopt, if ever he wished to avoid further loss of prestige and power of the Mughal empire. Prince Kambakhsh was chosen to conduct the peace talks with the Marathas.[70]

On 27th November 1703, Shahu, the Maratha king in captivity, was removed from Gulalbar (imperial enclosure) and was lodged with Kambakhsh. A word was sent around to the Marathas to attend the peace talks.

They were assured that with the successful outcome of peace talks, Shahu, the Maratha king, would be released from the captivity. Aurangzeb perhaps had thought that this would work as a dangling carrot, to attract the Marathas towards his side. However, this hardly evoked any response. The reasons were obvious as Bhimsen informs us - 'Prince Kambakhsh sent his men repeatedly to Dhanaji Jadhav. But did the Mughals conquer the Marathas? The entire Deccan had come into their possession like a soft pudding, why

should they make peace? Thus the envoy of prince Kambakhsh, Rai Bhan, the natural son of Shahaji, returned with disappointment. Raja Shahu was again removed to Gulalbar.' [71]

But then all hopes of reconciliation were not given up. According to Khafi Khan, Dhanaji Jadhav was approached again. He made it known that the talks would precede by an assurance from Aurangzeb, that there would not be any harm or damage to the life and property of all the nobles of Tarabai. On fulfilment of this condition, the Maratha sardars would meet Shahu at a distance of four to five miles away from the Mughal camp. On successful outcome of the talks, they were to be conducted to the presence of the Emperor through Kambakhsh. To Aurangzeb, this appeared to be a workable proposition. Accordingly, some seventy royal farmans were made out in the names of various Maratha sardars. But some adverse factor prevailed upon Aurangzeb and he withdrew the offer. Perhaps he seemd to have suspected the Marathas, who would have cleverly removed Raja Shahu from Gulalbar. Thus the proposal fell through. Sultan Husain, who was asked to convey this message to the Maratha leaders on behalf of Kambakhsh, had to fight his way back through the Maratha camp. [72]

After realising that his peace talks had failed, Aurangzeb, put forth a proposal through Hamid-ud-din Khan, to convert Raja Shahu to Islam. He publicly proclaimed the same, probably with the intention of bringing pressure over the Maratha leadership. But this tactical move of Aurangzeb hardly created any stir in the Maratha camp. They did not yield to this pressure. Shahu refused to opostatize. It was difficult to resolve the tangle. Finally Aurangzeb was persuaded and prevailed upon by his courtiers to give up the move and in place of Shahu, Khanderao and Jagjivan, the two Maratha noblemen, accepted conversion to Islam, if that could have saved Raja Shahu from further disgrace. Thus his second plan of pressurising the Marathas to yield,

was also scuttled prematurely. Subsequently, he had planned to release Shahu from the Mughal captivity and create dissensions among the Marathas, granting him the Chauth of the Suba of the Deccan. But this did not seem to have materialized, nor was he able to take any advantage of the divisions and dissensions, which were already there in the Maratha nobility. Thus the hostelities were resumed once again.

17. Return To Poona And Miserable Condition Of The Mughal Army

The failure of peace talks with the Marathas was followed by the return march of the Mughal army to Poona. The army arrived in the vicinity of Poona (1st May 1703). It reposed here for the next seven months. But during this stay of seven months, neither the comfort was restored nor any conditions which were congenial to peace, prosperity and happiness were created.

During the year 1702, there was an excessive rain-fall throughout Maharashtra, with the result that there was no harvest anywhere. The year 1703 saw an unbearable draught in Maharashtra as well as in Khandesh.[73] The entire Rabi crop was spoiled and there was an acute shortage of food grains throughout the country. The excessive rainfall and draught were followed by an epidemic like plague. A large number of soldiers and followers in the Mughal camp perished.[74] According to Bhimsen, the grain was sold at two seers a rupee, and only the rich could barely afford it. The army was in the grip of utter starvation. Added to it, the pay of the soldiers was in arrears. The morale of the fighting men in the Mughal rank and file was at its lowest ebb. Thus the intended halt and repose could hardly refresh them or enthuse new life in them. But nothing could move the Emperor. He expressed his desire to go ahead with the plan of the conquest of other forts of the Marathas. What price humanity had to pay for such an act of obstinacy!

On 10th November 1703, once again Aurangzeb's army set

on march towards Rajgadh and Torna,[75] the two strong holds of the Marathas, which had yet remained to be conquered.

18. Rajgadh And Torna Forts Humbled By The Mughals (1704)

Rajgadh, the stronghold of the Marathas, since the days of Shivaji, is about thirty miles south of Poona. It is huge in size, occupying a large hill covering an area of about twenty-four square miles. It is at considerable height from the sea level. In the words of Saqi Must'ad Khan, 'imagination cannot estimate its height. The wind alone can cross its thorny jungles and spectre haunted chasm'.[76] In the seventeenth century the surrounding jungles were infested with poisonous snakes and thorny bushes, through which to obtain a passage was a most difficult job. It took twenty days for the Mughal army to cross the distance of thirty miles from Poona to Rajgadh (10 November to 30 November).

The fort has got three different walls, which were of solid construction and bombardment of the same by the heavy artillery of the Mughals could hardly batter the same. It is divided into three sections called Machi, Padmavati towards upland, Suvela and Sanjivani in the direction of Talkonkan.

The Maratha qil'edar on the fort was Santaji Silimkar.[77] He was assisted by two brave Maratha soldiers viz. Firangoji and Hanmaji. The Marathas had kept themselves in readiness to meet the Mughal attack. The Maratha qil'edar was assured necessary military help and supplies by Tarabai, the Maratha queen. Mahipatrao Silimkar, the Deshmukh of Gunjan Maval region was asked to reinforce the troops, and give firm resistance to Aurangzeb's army in that region.[78] Shankaraji Narayan Sachiv took personal interest in the defence preparations. He also ensured food supplies to the besieged and guarded the line of communication during the siege.

Hamid-ud-din Khan and Tarbiyat Khan, issued orders for digging the trenches and carrying the guns to a hillock in order to blow up the fort walls. But the area surrounding the fort was so vast that it could not be effectively invested. They could not stop food supplies freely reaching the besieged from outside. The mines were laid and the fortification was carried to the fort walls. The guns were also mounted at high places. Tarbiyat Khan and Hamid-ud-din Khan made good progress in their work towards Padmavati section. At Padmavati there was a 'triangular enclosure, which is called a 'Sond' (shape of an elephant's trunk) formed by erecting two thick walls from the postern gate of the fort of Padmavati to the end of the hillock and making these two walls meet at a point. Below these walls, the path declines so sharply and is so slippery that no one could reach there even on foot. At the junction of the two walls was another strong tower which opened upon the back of the hill opposite to it. As the apex of this tower is thirty yards in height, straight as a stretched rope, the Mughal soldiers raised a battery opposite this tower.'[79] But they were not successful in capturing this tower. Sidhoji Thopte, the Sarnaubat of Padmavati, showed great courage and bravery while fighting with the enemy. He was struck by a cannon ball and was blown up into pieces.[80]

The Maratha garrison opposed bravely at Suvela. They fired guns and shots in addition to incessant showers of stones over the besieging army.[81] Thus the siege continued for over two months. During one of these encounters, the Maratha qil'edar, Santaji Silimkar, was shot dead by a bullet of a Mughal soldier.[82]

On Saturday, the 8th February 1704, the Mughal soldiers launched a severe attack. They mounted the guns and fired on the tower. Firangoji and Hanmaji fought bravely. But they could not hold it long and withdrew to the inner citadel of the fort.

The Marathas continued the resistence for the next ten

days. Finally negotiations were opened between the Mughal general Ruhullah Khan and the Maratha leaders Firangoji and Hanmaji.[83] It was agreed upon to surrender the fort in accordance with the terms of peace talks. And the Maratha garrison was permitted to go out in safety with bag and baggage.[84] On the night of 16th February, the Marathas vacated the fort and the Mughal flag was hoisted.[85] The fort was renamed as Nabi Shahgadh.

The Mughal flag was flying high on Rajgadh, but what were the material gains to the Emperor or his armymen? They hardly gained anything substantial with the conquest of the fort. On the contrary the general condition of the army was deteriorating. Grain and fodder was in acute shortage in the camp. Even grass was being sold for two seers a rupee. Many men perished. The country wore a look of devastation and desolation. The bands of Banjaras conveying the grain could not reach the army camp. The Mughal ally at the sea, Sidi Yaqut, was ordered to send supplies and relieve the situation. Under these severe conditions of famine, the Mughal army commenced its march towards Torna, a fort eight miles to the west of Rajgadh.

19. The Mughal Sword Conquers Torna

The siege was laid on 23rd February 1704.[86] Tarbiyat Khan engaged himself in digging trenches and laying mines on the sides of the fort gate. Muhammad Amin Khan blockaded the fort and restricted all the movements of the garrison. Aman-ullah Khan, a grandson of Alawardi Khan, was sent to assist the siege work. The Maratha garrison fired musket shots incessantly. Twenty persons of Sultan Hussain, a Mughal commander, were killed. From the Maratha side, some eighty persons, who were carrying supplies into the fort, were captured by the Mughals.

On the night of 10th March 1704, Aman-ullah Khan, a wreckless brave person, with his Mavale infantry men, silently scaled the fort wall by means of rope ladders, blew the trumpet and charged the garrison. Simultaneously

Hamid-ud-din Khan also scaled the fort. This surprise night attack was faced bravely by the garrison. Many men were killed on both the sides. Finally the garrison asked for terms of capitulation. [87] They were permitted to go unmolested, leaving behind their weapons.

Thus Torna fell to the Mughal sword. According to Khafi Khan, this was perhaps the only fort which was captured by the strength of Mughal arms and not by any other means. [88] The fort was renamed 'Fath-ul-ghalib'. [89]

With the conquest of the fort of Torna, Aurangzeb's plan of capturing all the forts under the Marathas was completed. He must have been more than satisfied and must have thanked the Almighty for having given him sufficient strength to uproot the Marathas and to conquer their hill forts wherein their real strength was centred. In fact with the conquest of all these forts, Aurangzeb might have safely presumed that the Marathas were completely humbled and they could never raise their heads high again. But alas! Such was not the course of Destiny. His assumptions merely turned out to be part of his wishful thinking. In reality day by day the Marathas were becoming more and more strong. It was Aurangzeb's army which ultimately got exhausted in the process of these campaigns of hilly regions. The Maratha war strategy was making headway towards success. The Government under Tarabai and Shivaji II was firmly establishing itself. Their officers had started collecting revenues from the Mughal dominions. Their qil'edars, who had in the past handed over the forts to the Mughal soldiers, induldged in taking them one after the other with ease, confidence and certainty of success. How was the Mughal Emperor to reconcile with the situation? He simply chose to overlook all these adverse happenings. And perhaps that was the best course left open for him.

He and his ramshackle army retired to Khed, near Junnar in Poona district for repose and respite.

NOTES

1. MA, p.424
2. Ibid, p.425
3. KK, p.471
4. Ibid. Khafi Khan presents a very detailed account of the misery that befell the besieging Mughal army.
5. MA, p.426
6. Ibid, pp.426-27
7. MA, p.428. The new temple built by Shivaji was destroyed and converted into a mosque.
8. Ibid, p.429
9. KK, pp.473-74
10. MA, p.429. Sabitgad remains unidentified, as no remains of it are traceable presently.
11. HA, Vol.V, p.172
12. MA, p.429
    Where is this Khavaspur? In the words of Sarkar, 'I conjecturally place it on the Nandani river west of Bhushangadh and not on Yevla (east of B) which has an unfailing water supply.' (HA, Vol.V, p.170 footnote). According to Bhimsen the camp was on the river Man (Bhimsen as quoted by J. Sarkar HA, Vol.V, p.170 footnote). According to Sarkar this was impossible in view of the statement of Ma'sir-i-Alamgiri. Now let us see what Ma'sir-i-Alamgiri has to say. According to it the Mughal army commenced its march from Bhushangadh on 19th Safar H. 1112 (15 July 1700) and reached Khavaspur on 26th Rabi I (31 August 1700) i.e. it took about 46 days to reach Khavaspur. Therefore Khavaspur is not at a day's march from Bhushangadh. A careful reading of the text of Ma'sir-i-Alamgiri suggests that the march of Mughal army had already commenced from Bhushangadh. It must have halted at some place from where Khavaspur was indicated as at a distance of a day's march. In view of this Sarkar's interpretation appears to be incorrect. Marathi source SCP, p.67 (G.P. Shakavali) is more informative. According to it, Aurangzeb encamped at Maini which is about 8 miles east of Bhushangadh and then reached Khavaspur on the banks of the Man river, which is about 45 miles to the east of Bhushangadh. The Mughal army took about 45 days to reach that place, which appears quite probable in view of the many obstacles on the way. Therefore in my view Khavaspur referred to, appears to be on the Man river.
13. According to KK, p.474 Aazam was sent to Ujjain.

14. MA, p.431. KK, pp.475-76
15. HA, Vol.V, p.173, Sarkar's information is based on Akhbarat dt.2/3 August 1700 and 11 January 1701.
16. MA, pp.436-37
17. KK, pp.478 & 485
18. Ibid p.484
19. MA, p.437,KK, p.488
20. HA, Vol.V, p.177 & Dilkusha p.134b. Rao Dalpat and Mukhlis Khan gave battles to Dhanaji at Hukeri, Raibagh and Chikodi in Karnataka.
21. HA, Vol.V, pp.177-78
22. HA, Vol.V, p.178. Bhimsen contradicts this information. According to him, Ramchandra started from Vishalgadh (Khelna) at the head of a large infantry and cavalry. They came near Panhala in order to attack the besiegers. They attacked the siege work. Ten miles away from Panhala is Kolhapur, by that road Banjaras were conveying the food grains. The Marathas attacked them. Bidar Bakht sent his men to rescue the Banjaras. Sarfaraz Khan Dakhani had also hastened for help. But the Maratha army was quite large. Therefore the Mughal forces took to their heels. Sarfaraz Khan solicited help from Bidar Bakht and Zulfiqar Khan, Rao Dalpat along with Ram Singh Hada were despatched to meet the Marathas. A pitched battle took place and the Marathas lost about 400 men in killed. (MM, pp.151-52).
23. HA, Vol.V, p.179
24. HA, Vol.V, p.177. KK, p.490 indicates that the negotiations were opened by Muhammad Murad Khan with the Marathas.
25. MA, p.438, KK, p.490, SCP, p.67.
According to it, the Mughals got the fort on Saka 1623 Jeshth (13) 14 i.e. 1701 June 24 for an amount of 55 thousand rupees. This is the only source which mentions the exact amount paid by the Mughals. There is also contradiction in the date of vacating the fort. According to MA, p.438, the fort was vacated on 28th May, while SCP, p.67 gives the date as 24th June. There is no third source available to verify this.
26. KK, p.490, Akh. J.45 Muharram 11.
27. MA, p.442,KK, p.491 makes the statement that Parasgadh was taken by the Mughals and renamed Sadiqgadh which evidently, the author has mistaken for Vardhangadh. SCP, p.67 states that Vardhangadh was captured by Bidar Bakht sometime in September-October. Evidently there is some mistake about it. It further states that he captured two other forts namely

Samangadh and Kalanidhi during the same time. Persian sources are silent about the capture of these forts. Therefore it is difficult to contradict this information.

28. MA, p.443, SCP, p.67 indicates the fall sometime between August-September.
29. MA, p.444. SCP, p.67 mentions the conquest of the fort between August-September 1701 (Saka 1623, Bhadrapad).
30. Akh. J.45 Shaban 9
31. Bombay Gazetteer, XXIV, p.2-5
32. APV, No.2, p.2
33. Ibid.
34. MA, p.448
35. Ibid, p.449
36. KK, p.493
37. SCS, Vol.V, No.979, p.270
38. KK, p.493
39. Ibid, p.495
40. Dilkusha 132b.
41. Ibid, 132a, 132b and 135b
42. KK, pp.495-96
43. KGIS, Part II, No.64, p.132
44. Ibid, Part I, No.11, pp.8-9.
45. KK, p.496, MA, p.453
46. MA, p.453
47. Ibid, pp.453-55.
48. MA, p.455. It states that Fath-ullah Khan was struck by a plank of the raft. It further states that he was in bed for a month. From Akhbarat it appears that he recovered within three weeks.
49. MA, p.454 gives the date of battle as 4th March. In the Akhbarat the date is given as 14th March. Therefore, I have placed this incident under 14th March.
50. Raja Jai Singh : According to J. Sarkar he is grandson of Mirza Raja Jai Singh called Sawai Jai Singh. (MA translation by Sarkar, Index p.340). Bhimsen also says the same. But from Masir-ul-Umra (Vol.I, p.164) we come across the information that he was great grandson of Mirza Raja Jai Singh.
51. MA, p.455 states that Fath-ullah Khan was also to assist him. This appears to be improbable as Fath-ullah Khan's camp was in front of the main gate to the eastern side of the fort and Bidar Bakht was exactly opposite him on the western side of the fort. It also states that Sidi Yaqut Khan with 2000 men and material was placed at prince's disposal. This again appears to be incorrect as he was already positioned with his men near the

siege line of Muhammad Amin Khan near Katar Khelna.

52. SCS, Vol.XII, Supplement 56A, No.79. The letter is dated 18th March 1702.
53. HS, p.274. This is Aurangzeb's letter to Parshuram Trimbak, (27 May 1702) confirming the demands he had earlier made through a letter.
54. SCP, p.67, (G.P.Shakavali)
55. The date of vacating the fort as given in Akhbarat is 6th June, according to MA, p.457 it is 22 Muharram i.e. 8th June, according to SCP p.67 (G.P.Shakavali) it is Jeshth 13, S.1624 i.e. 5th June). It is difficult to arrive at a correct conclusion, however the date given in Akhbarat i.e. 6th June appears to be more probable than any other date.
56. KK, p.500 accepts the contention that a bribe was given in order to capture the fort. MA, has tried to hide this fact cleverly by saying that some brahmins came from Parashuram's side to negotiate peace, p.457. It is only G.P.Shakavali (p.67) which mentions about the exact sum paid to the Maratha qil'edar.
57. MA, p.459.
    The entire narrative from the description of the siege and happenings at various siege lines commencing from February 1701 till the end of the siege is based on original unpublished Akhbarat i.e. News letters pertaining to 46th regnal year of Aurangzeb's reign supplemented by KK and MA. The information is very exhaustive. Unfortunately a few Akhabarat of this period are missing. However, available records are eloquent about the facts of the siege. The mode of getting the information was either through the spies or through the despatch writers employed at each siege line. The reporting has been sincere and factual which helps us to arrive at the correct conclusion. (Nos. 243 to 287). The author has reconstructed it according to the chronology of the events and has also compared it with other published sources both in Persian and Marathi, wherever possible. The passages covered by inverted commas are taken from the Akhabarat (about 44) of this period, i.e. Ramzan, J.46 to 20th Muharram, J.46 (January 1702 to 6 June 1702).
58. KK, pp.503-7 gives graphic account of the sufferings of the Mughal army including the plight of prime minister Asad Khan and Aurangzeb himself during this retreat.
59. MA, p.463
60. Ibid, p.465
61. Ibid, p.467

62. HA, Vol.V, p.188. All the details of the march of the Mughal army are based on Akhbarat J.46, as quoted by Prof.Sarkar.
63. MM, .163
64. MA, p.469, KK, p.510 gives the date of arrival of the Mughal army near Kondana as 22nd December. SCP, p.67.
65. Purandare Daftar, Vol.I, No.21 & 21, p.12.
66. SCP, p.68. KK, p.510 mentions that the fort was secured for a large sum. MA is silent about it. Purnadare Daftar No.22, p.11, mentions the name of Gomajipant. It is not known whether he is the same Purandare or not. Only Rajaram by Sardesai, p.120 mentions the name as Gomaji Purandare, but the author has not given the source of his information.
67. MA, p.474, SCP, p.68 gives the date 14th April 1703.
68. Dilkusha mentions the name of the place as Abola. But evidently the reading is not correct. Could this be Abhone close to Baglan or Ranola, 8 m. from Nandurbar.
69. The narrative is based on Bhimsen's Dilkusha, the two translations viz. MM pp.161-68 (Marathi) and Tarikh-i. Dilkusha pp.141a to 146a (English) by Prof. Sarkar.
70. Dilkusha p.145b.
71. Ibid.
72. KK, p.520. Khafi Khan relates this incident sometime after 1708. It does not appear to be probable. We have to accept Bhimsen's version, who places it in 1703.
73. SCP, p.68
74. MA, p.477. According to Manucci two million people perished during this period.
75. Ibid.
76. Ibid, p.478
77. Rajwade, Vol.XV, No.288, p.297
78. Ibid, Vol.XVII, No. 24, p.40, No.27, p.41, No.29, p.42
79. MA, p.479
80. MSIH, Vol. I, No.70, p.60
81. KK, p.513
82. Rajwade, Vol.XVII, No.24, p.40. No.27, p.41. No.29, p.42. As a reward for this gallantry his son Prataprao was promoted to Sena Panch Hazari. (Letter from Shankaraji Narayan Sachiv to Prataprao Silimkar dated 10th January 1704 (No.25, p.40).
83. MA, p.485. Prof. Sarkar has suggested the reading of these two names as Firangoji and Dhanaji, but it does not appear to be correct. KK, p.513 gives only one name i.e. Hamaji. To me this name appears very close to Hanmaji which makes some sense. Otherwise names given in the original text are unintelligible.

84. SCP, p.68.
85. MA, p.485. SCP, p.68 indicates the date of vacating the fort as 18th February.
86. MA, p.486.
87. MA, p.487, KK, p.523, SCP, p.68
88. KK, p.523
89. MA, p.488

4. The Catastrophe (1704-1707)

On 10th March 1704, Torna fell to the Mughals and that completed the grand design of Aurangzeb 'to capture all the forts of the Marathas.' On 19th October 1699, he had left his base camp at Islampuri with all his army, cavalry and artillery. On 25th November 1699 he captured Vasantgadh, the first fort in his ultimate struggle for vanquishing the Marathas. By 10th March 1704, i.e. in a period of four years and five months the Mughal army captured, Vasantgadh, Satara, Parali, Chandan-Vandan, Panhala, Pawangadh, Vishalgadh, Sinhgadh, Rajgadh and Torna. Most of these forts as we have seen came in the Mughal possession after they had doled out huge amounts as bargain-price to the Maratha commanders of the forts. Torna perhaps was the only fort which was conquered by the strength of the Mughal sword.

In fact, according to Khafi Khan, who gives us an eye witness account of these historical events, Aurangzeb, through his spies and news-writers, used to know secretly the price paid by a Mughal general or a mansabdar to a Maratha commander. The nobleman was compensated for an equal amount from the treasury by way of reward. If the officer had paid more and if the report was for lesser amount, then the officer was paid only the amount indicated in the report. Any amount of pleading with the Emperor for higher payments would not yield any results. The poor officer had to suffer the loss. Thus the Mughal treasury was emptied. The treasures which had remained untouched since the days of Jahangir and Shah Jahan were conveyed to the Deccan,

ironically enough, to be distributed amongst the robbers (as Aurangzeb fancied to call the Marathas). The coffers were emptied in order to derive the satisfaction of fulfilment of his dream. And seemingly he reached very near his expectations. By now (1704) all the strategic and important forts in Maharashtra had come into the Mughal possession. But alas! The success did not seem to last long. It appeared to be more deceptive than the elusive Marathas. Hardly had he reposed from this gigantic task of punishing his enemy, the news started pouring in from all the country side about the increased Maratha activities with greater dynamism and vigour throughout the imperial dominions. This was certainly not expected of a vanquished foe.

A review of four and half years period clearly indicates that the supremacy of the Mughal Emperor and his army was seriously challenged. In fact it was shadowed by the danger of defeat. The various encounters showed that the Marathas were capable of giving determined resistance. By now the struggle had entered into its final phase, and had certainly taken an adverse turn for the Mughals. The dream of Aurangzeb of defeating and uprooting the Marathas had more or less remained a fancy, and far away from practical life. He was paying the price all right, for all that he desired, but it did not yield any rich dividends. Nay! it brought him only frustration and disappointment. The reports from all corners of the Deccan poured the news of increased Maratha activities. They were busy recapturing all those forts which they had lost during last four and half years. The ease and confidence with which they were accomplishing this task must have been very agonising and painful to Aurangzeb. His already age-worn and fragile body was no more in a condition to overcome the rude shock. Perhaps it was his strong will power and coveted ambition, which kept him going.

It is a remarkable fact that during the course of these events, the obstacles which occasioned the failure were not

only the outcome of fierce determination of the Marathas but were also backed by the elements. The forts in the hilly tract of the Sahyadri ranges, frustrated Aurangzeb's task, the burning of villages, the desolated lands, the excessive rainfall accompanied by pestilence, and followed by a severe draught throughout Maharashtra completed the ruin of the Mughal army. Bhimsen, an eye witness, has repeatedly complained about it. While ventilating the feelings of the army men, he says, ' .... the realm has been desolated, nobody gets justice, they (men) have been utterly ruined. The ryots have given up cultivation; the jagirdars do not get a penny from their fiefs ..... Many mansabdars in the Deccan, starving and impoverished, have gone over to the Marathas [1] ....'. It is not necessary to elaborate it further. The Marathas exploited the situation to their advantage. They made the condition of their enemy very miserable. To quote Bhimsen, we notice that, 'this year their audacity was even greater than in the past. Out of the capital cities of the eight chief Subahs of the empire, population has decreased in the three Deccan towns of Bijapur, Haidarabad and Burhanpur, while the villages round them have been totally ruined. From the Narmada southwards throughout the entire Deccan, in every pargana and village, the Marathas have spread like ants and locusts.' [2]

Since 1701, the Marathas aimed at causing the breakdown of the administrative machinery in the various regions under the Mughals. This would have resulted in non collection of revenue by the respective Mughal officers, which was much needed for the maintenance of the fighting arm of the Mughals. The Maratha leadership, thus diverted their activities, in order to execute the plan of collecting chauth and other revenue from provincial Mughal officers. In small bands, they raided villages and towns alike. Their movements were very quick and speedy. The Mughal thanedars could hardly face them or cause their rout in an open confrontation. The strategy was rightly planned by the Maratha leaders. It was more essential to deliver such a blow

to their foe than a major victory in any battlefield. Dislocation of administration meant paralysing the active limbs of the Mughals. This aim they could have achieved provided the campaign was launched throughout the length and breadth of Maharashtra, simultaneously, in big towns and small villages. They successfully created such conditions. Bhimsen has bluntly expressed the same, 'The mansabdars, on account of the small forces under them, cannot gain control over the territories granted to them in jagirs, The local zamindars, growing stronger, have joined the Marathas, levied troops, and stretched the hand of oppression over the realm .... As the imperial dominions have been given out in tankha (fief) to the jagirdars, so too the Marathas have made the distribution of the whole empire among their generals, and thus one kingdom has to maintain two sets of jagirdars .... The peasents subjected to this double exaction have collected arms and horses and joined the Marathas ....' [3]

Another factor which contributed to the fast deteriorating condition of the Mughals in Maharashtra was the state of the army. The utter starvation, arrears of pay and abnormal living conditions made them almost revolt against the Emperor. This also caused large scale desertions to the Marathas.

The condition of the Mughal army had become very precarious. There was a long continued famine and nowhere grain was cheap. 'The Mughal sardars were left without any source of income. Therefore many of them, goaded by poverty, took to plundering in order to support themselves ... and some went into shares with the Maratha raiders.' [4]

Added to the miserable state of the Mughal army, the Marathas also intensified their activities and aggravated the evil. In all parts of the country, wherever the Marathas attacked, they engaged in regular revenue collection of the place. They appointed their own Kamavisdars. They stopped all the roads used for conveying Mughal supplies and

treasury and never missed any opportunity to attack any Mughal caravan in their sight. They collected regularly chauth from these villages. 'The powerful headmen of certain villages, in concert with Maratha subahdars, built small fortresses and refused to pay revenue to the imperial government, the Maratha troops supporting them. Upto the boundary of Ahmadabad and Malwa they raided and reduced the country to dust. They looted caravans even when they were close to the imperial army and also plundered the grain market of the Emperor's own camp.' [5]

1. The Maratha Offensive (1703-1704)

During 1703 and in the beginning of 1704, while the Mughal armies were engaged in taking hill forts of the Marathas like Rajgadh and Torna, the Marathas planned to launch massive attacks on the Mughal territories. They were now on the offensive. They were preparing to strike a decisive blow to the Mughal might in the Deccan.

In June-July 1703, the Prince's (Aazam) camp, bag and baggage was looted by Dhanaji Thorat near Khanwadi as the Prince was marching from Rajewadi to Poona. The condition of the Mughal soldiers was made miserable, as they were stripped off everything including their under garments. When the incident was reported to Aurangzeb, he ordered for the arrest of Deshmukh and Deshkulkarni of the village. A collective fine of two thousand rupees was imposed on the villagers. But poor people had no money to pay the fine. [6] They were thus being driven to a desparate condition.

In November-December 1703, Nemaji Shinde and Kesopant attacked Sharza Khan, Naib-Subhadar of Berar. [7] They captured two thousand horses, eleven elephants and Sharza Khan was taken captive. He was released only after receiving a ransom of three lacs of rupees.

In 1704, the Marathas could clearly see that their tactics and strategy yielded the necessary results. They forced the Mughal commanders to be on their defensive. With their

excellent tactics they proved to be the masters of the complete war theatre. They made the condition of Mughal sardars fairly miserable. What their opponents sought was the escape from the fast moving Maratha sword, and in most of the cases they paid price for it as demanded by the Marathas. Thus the strength and courage of the Marathas grew beyond expectations of Aurangzeb. They had mustered a large number of recruits and big divisions were engaged in operations under the prominent Maratha sardars. Aurangzeb's dismay and despair must have been intense in watching the growing strength of the Marathas. According to Manucci, 'These (Maratha) leaders and their troops move in these days with such confidence, because they have cowed the Mughal commanders and inspired them with fear. At the present time they possess artillery, musketry, bows and arrows, with elephants and camels for their baggage and tents. They carry these to secure some repose from time to time .... In short, they are equipped and move about just like the armies of the Mughals .... Only a few years ago they did not march in this fashion. In those days their arms were only lances and long swords two inches wide .... at present time they move like conquerors, showing no fear of any Mughal troops ....' [8]

2. Aurangzeb's Departure For Bedar Territory In Karnataka

On 17th April 1704, the Mughal army with its vast paraphernalia arrived at Khed from Poona after a brief halt at Junnar. The imperial tents were pitched there. The village was renamed as Masudabad. [9] On 9th May, the Mughal army lamented the sudden death of its best general, Ruhullah Khan. [10] At Masudabad, reports started pouring in about the rebellion of Pidya Nayak, a leader of the Bedar community in Karnataka, near Gulbarga region. Pidya Nayak had started exacting taxes from the Mughal subjects, levied chauth and with the help of the Maratha noblemen, thwarted the Mughal administration in that region. He had become so strong that, no general from the Mughal army was willing to confront him openly and challenge his

authority. Therefore, Aurangzeb, inspite of his old age, decided to launch a campaign of Bedar territory in person. Like the conquest of Torna in Maharashtra this proved to be the last campaign of his life.

The Mughal army commenced its march [11] (22nd October 1704) towards Wagingera, the capital of the Bedars, with utmost reluctance and unwillingness. Their first halt was at Bahadurgadh. With lightening speed the Marathas attacked the Mughal camp at Bahadurgadh, [12] and they marched away with tremendous success.

With the departure of Aurangzeb and the Mughal army from Maharashtra the Marathas got the best opportunity to retake their forts and regain their lost territory.

During his absence from Maharashtra, Aurangzeb did not make any effective arrangements to check the Maratha activities, which were growing intense day by day. Zulfiqar Khan was the only capable military general, who was deputed to meet the new challenge. But he could hardly match the speed and swiftness of the Maratha horse. Later on he was also recalled to join the campaign at Wagingera.

The Marathas on their part utilised the exit of Aurangzeb to their utmost advantage. Sometime before the first week of January 1705, Bahiro Pandit Pradhan issued orders to Dhavji Visar to capture Lohgadh. Accordingly, he captured Lohgadh by escalade. [13] In June Rajmachi came in their possession through the exertions of Dhavji Visar. [14] In June-July the Mughal qil'edar of Sinhgadh was caught unaware and the Marathas captured the fort by escalade. [15] The garrison was terror struck by the Marathas and the Mughal qil'edar handed over the fort to the Marathas without any resistance. Tarbiyat Khan and Zulfiqar Khan were sent back to re-take the fort. But by the time they invested the fort, a period of six months had already passed. This was the speed of the Mughal generals of Aurangzeb, who were supposed to execute the Emperor's commands, with utmost speed and efficiency. During this declining period of Aurangzeb,

almost all his nobles, showed similiar apathy and neglect in executing the royal orders.

The Marathas launched vigorously their campaign of retaking the forts from the Mughals. Under the command of Shankaraji Narayan, Rohida and Rajgadh were brought under the Maratha rule. The other notable forts like Panhala, [16] Pawangadh and Satara were taken back through the operations successfully supervised by Parashuram Trimbak. Thus in a short time the Maratha leadership, with its vigorous efforts, blasted all the good work done by Aurangzeb in order to consolidate the Mughal power in the Deccan. The Marathas by now had become so powerful, that in the words of Manucci, '.... They move like conquerors and showing no fear of any Mughal troops'.

After 20th April 1705, Guna Shinde, with a large Maratha army ravaged the two places Ratanjan and Partur in Sholapur and Beed districts respectively. Zulfiqar Khan hastened to repulse the Maratha attack. By the time he reached that territory the Marathas had disappeared from there. [17] Then the news came about the Marathas becoming strong in the Marathwada region.

Zulfiqar Khan was ordered to go to that territory. He despatched a force under Ramsingh Hada and Rao Dalpat to Vaijapur [18] and Bhilpeth in Aurangabad region. The Mughal force could hardly chase the Marathas. With swift and rapid marches they disappeared. In the meantime the imperial cash and treasury which was being conveyed from Burhanpur to Aurangabad was looted by the Marathas at Fardapur. [19]

3. The Maratha Offensive In Malwa

In January 1704, the Marathas crossed the Narmada river under the leadership of Nemaji Shinde, Parsoji Bhosale and Kesopant. It was estimated that they had fifty thousand strong troops. [20] They besieged Doraha village (24th January 1704), imprisoned the Mughal faujdar, burnt the village and looted every house and did not leave anything with the inhabitants except the garments on their person. Aurangzeb

ordered Firuz Jang to oppose this Maratha force. A fierce battle took place between the two forces and it is reported that the Marathas were defeated. [21] Simultaneously, Prince Bidar Bakht was hastened to face the Maratha divisions in the Malwa territory.

4. The Maratha Offensive In Karnataka

In 1704, the Marathas crossed the Narmada and entered into Malwa and caused devastation. During 1705, with the exit of Aurangzeb from Maharashtra, they followed the Mughal armies in the Karnataka. A Maratha army under Dhanaji Jadhav and Hindurao Ghorpade consisting of five thousand cavalry and twenty thousand infantry arrived at Wagingera [22] (8th March 1705). They attacked the Mughal camp several times. The siege lines were shattered and all the good work done by the Mughal soldiers was undone. They were forced to withdraw. In the meantime, they rescued their families which were kept there during the last few troubled years in Maharashtra, when Aurangzeb had launched a campaign to capture all their hill forts. For securing their military assistance, Pidya Nayak paid them several thousand rupees. The Maratha offensive was so strong that the Mughal army itself got besieged. All their military activities ceased. The Mughal generals refused to go out in open and fight the Marathas. The Emperor censured his generals but had little effect.

This state of affairs continued for a very short period. With the arrival of Nusrat Jang (Zulfiqar Khan) and Daud Khan, the Marathas quietly withdrew (end of March). But the Maratha offensive caused sufficient damage to the Mughal siege work of Wagingera.

5. The Maratha Offensive In Gujarat

Battle Of Ratnapur - A Decisive Blow To The Mughals

On 25th November 1705, the Subahdar of Gujarat, Prince Muhammad Aazam, left Ahmadabad in order to meet Aurangzeb. On 25th March 1706, he arrived by way of Junnar at Ahmadnagar. [23] In his place Prince Bidar Bakht

was appointed as the Subahdar of Gujarat. He reached Ahmadabad on 30th July 1706. The Marathas fully utilised this interval of eight months by launching a campaign of Gujarat. The Maratha army stated to be eighty thousand strong under Dhanaji entered into Gujarat, which, in the absence of a proper subahdar, had become virtually defenceless. The deputy governor of the province detached a force against the Maratha army. But the Mughal commanders did not see eye to eye with each other, and hence they defeated the very purpose of an united front against the Marathas. They assembled their forces at Baba Pyara ford on the banks of the Narmada. The forces were lying there over a month without making any operations. From thence these forces advanced towards Ratanpur on the eastern bank of the Narmada near Rajpipla. Here the Maratha force fell upon them mercilessly. A fierce battle took place. Many were lost in killed and wounded on the Mughal side. Many of the soldiers abandoned the battlefield and were on their heels to Broach. Two of their chiefs, Safdar Khan Babi and Nazar Ali Khan, were captured. They paid a ransom of eight lacs of rupees to the Marathas. The Mughal camp, including bag and baggage was looted and many of them were taken as war prisoners. This happened by about 15th March 1706. [24]

The Deputy Governor of Gujarat, Abdul Hamid Khan, was immediately informed about the miserable plight of the Mughal army. He hastened to the help of his colleagues at the head of a small force. As he arrived near Baba Pyara ford, the Marathas, with their vast and superior force surrounded this detachment. All were taken captive including the deputy governor. Their entire camp was plundered. Then the victors levied chauth on the villages and surrounding territory and then retired. [25] The defeat in the battle of Ratnapur proved to be a decisive blow to the power, prestige and strength of the Mughals in the Deccan.

6. Aurangzeb Returns To Ahmadnagar From Wagingera

The siege and conquest of Wagingera was the last of campaigns of the mighty Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb, accompanied by large army artillery and cavalry. On 27th April 1705, the Bedars surrendered the fort of Wagingera to the Mughals. [26] After the campaign was over the Mughal army moved to Devapur, eight miles south of Wagingera, a quiet green village, near the Krishna river. This was done mainly to give much needed repose and relief to his troops.

At Devapur Aurangzeb suddenly fell ill. "His spare frame had been enabled by regular habits and a sober life to stand incessant work and rigorous marching for well nigh ninety years marvellously well, but at last it seemed to have been worn out. And if he died .... the North-Indian army, girt round by countless ill-subdued enemies in that far off southern land of hills and jungles and strange peoples would perish helplessly. Despair seized all men .... when Aurangzeb fell ill and took to his bed." [27] The rumours were being spread fast about Aurangzeb's death. But the destiny willed otherwise and he recovered from this terrible illness.

On 23rd October 1705, after the rainy season was over, he issued orders to return to Ahmadnagar. [28] The imperial tents were brought down and Aurangzeb sitting in a *palki* with easy marches moved from Devapur. In a month and a half he reached Bahadurgadh. (6th December 1705). Here he stayed during the month of Ramzan. After Ramzan was over, the troops were ordered to march towards Ahmadnagar. The army commenced its march on 14th January 1706, and reached Ahmadnagar on 20th January. [29] Aurangzeb returned to Ahmadnagar after a long interval of twenty-two years.

7. The Maratha Offensive And The Failure Of The Mughals To Check The Same

Conquest of Torna proved to be the last campaign of Aurangzeb against the Marathas. In this campaign he was

personally present. Subsequent to this, he did not lead his troops in action against the Marathas at any time. He returned from Devapur in Karnataka to Bahadurgadh in Ahmadnagar district, in almost disabled condition. The terrible fever, in which he was enveloped had left him weak and feeble. The nobles paid him lip service only, and hardly did they obey his commands and executed the tasks assigned to them. The condition of the army had become hopeless. Discontent was visible on the face of Mughal soldier.

The worst part of the situation was the growing strength of the Marathas. During Aurangzeb's absence from Maharashtra in (1705), they were moving freely throughout the Mughal dominions like conquerors. Hardly any resistance was offered. False reports of their defeats were being sent to Aurangzeb by the respective Mughal commanders. Aurangzeb with his usual practice got them verified, and even when he knew that the contents were false he could hardly take any effective measures against his own erring officers. The whole complex of the administration had undergone a change, and that change had its own adverse effects on the stability of the Mughal rule in the Deccan.

The Marathas were so emboldened in their design that on Aurangzeb's return march from Bahadurgadh to Ahmadnagar, a vast Maratha force followed the rear of his army. It effectively cut out the line of communication and supplies of the Mughals. Hamid-ud-din Khan, a brave general in the Mughal army, was ordered to punish the Marathas and re-establish the line of communication. But he never went himself. On his behalf he deputed some of his lieutenants to carry out the operations. The Marathas, knowing the ability of the deputies, fell upon them suddenly and killed them mercilessly. A large number of them were taken prisoners. [30] They recovered many horses, besides a large booty. The encounter did not end with the defeat of this contingent of Hamid-ud-din Khan, but they advanced a step further and also attacked the imperial camp.

During the year 1705 and in the beginning of the year 1706 the Marathas lodged very systematic attacks in the provinces of Ahmadnagar, Sholapur region, Parenda and Mangalvedha, Aurangabad, (Marathwada) Khandesh and Malwa. We get detailed accounts of their penetration in these regions. Hardly there was any stronghold of the Mughals which was not attacked by the Marathas in this year. They had already set on the campaign of retaking their forts from the Mughals. This strategy had yielded the results to the utmost satisfaction of the Marathas. They delivered a crushing blow to the Mughal power in Maharashtra and surrounding regions.

The condition of the imperial camp at Ahmadnagar had become hopeless. The Marathas had put the Mughal camp virtually under surveillance. The roads leading to Ahmadnagar were closely guarded by them. The movements of the Mughal officers were carefully watched, and after finding an appropriate opportunity, they attacked the Mughals. Thus the Marathas managed to turn the tables against their most formidable enemy.

The only notable success the Mughals got in 1706, was retaking of Sinhgadh from the Marathas by Zulfiqar Khan.

On 23rd January 1706,Zulfiqar Khan was sent to recapture Kondana. He was assisted by Tarbiyat Khan, the chief of the Mughal artillery. Along with Zulfiqar Khan, Raja Shahu was sent on this campaign. Saqi Must'ad Khan mentions that this was done 'for some political reasons'. [31] Probably, this looks to be one more attempt on the part of Aurangzeb to reconcile with the Marathas. But later events show that this strategy did not yield any results as the Marathas did not respond favourably to the call of Aurangzeb.

The siege continued for some time and Zulfiqar Khan opened negotiations with the Maratha qil'edar through the mediation of Ram Singh Hada. [32] Finally, Zulfiqar Khan got the fort on 21st March 1706, only after paying the bargain price to the Maratha qil'edar.

This perhaps was the last recorded victory of the Mughals against the Marathas. Subsequent to it we do not find the Mughals making any consolidated effort to take back the other forts, as they did in the past (1700-1704) under the direct command of Aurangzeb. Now onwards we find that the Mughal generals and the troops were literally forced to be on their defensive. The Marathas had very swiftly started penetrating in all parts of the Deccan. Their impact was visible in Marathwada, Aurangabad region, the main land of Maharashtra, Ahmadnagar, Parenda, Beed, Sholapur, Mangalvedha region, Western Maharashtra, Satara, Miraj, Kolhapur region, Khandesh and Berar, Malwa, Ujjain and parts of Gujarat. Besides these regions Aurangzeb's own camp was also a victim of the Maratha offensive.

In April-May 1706, a vast Maratha army under the generals like Dhanaji Jadhav, Nemaji Shinde, Dado Malhar, Sambhaji Nimbalkar and many others appeared four miles away from the Mughal camp at Ahmadnagar. Aurangzeb sent Khan-i-Alam and other commanders to drive them away, but this force was hopelessly outnumbered and had to be re-inforced. There was a long and severe contest. Then the Marathas withdrew from the vicinity of the Mughal camp. [33]

Shortly again Zulfiqar Khan was sent to Miraj to chase Dhanaji (June). Dhanaji swiftly crossed the Krishna river, leaving Zulfiqar Khan to his fate as the monsoon had already set in. During July 1706, the Marathas achieved another signal victory by capturing Vasantgadh from the Mughals.

In December 1706 and January 1707, the Marathas were so vigilant and so active that they did not permit the normal movements of the Mughal officers from one province to another. In December Izzat-ullah Khan was proceeding to Malwa on being appointed the Subahdar of that province. He could hardly reach Salabatpur when he was compelled to halt there till a new force joined him, [34] as the Marathas would not let go the Subahdar unmolested.

In the same month the Marathas were active in the vicinity of Mangalvedha and Sangola in the Sholapur region. This contingent was commanded by Dhanaji Jadhav and Santaji Mohite. Zulfiqar Khan was ordered to chastise them. He had reached about twenty miles distance from Mangalvedha [35] when the Marathas quickly turned towards the small fortress of Sangola. After a while, they moved towards Bijapur in the Karnataka region. Tarabai, the dowager queen of the Marathas, sent reinforcements to the army of Dhanaji. [36] But there was no open confrontation between the opposing sides and Zulfiqar Khan retired to Miraj without any success. [37]

A pitched battle took place between Maratha sardar Balaji Vishvanath and the Mughal army sometime before April 1706. The Mughal army had encamped in the village of Vani (near Nasik). Balaji, the Maratha Subahdar of the Poona territory, at the head of ten thousand men, ravaged the village of Dindori, adjacent to Vani for three days. Then he fell upon the Mughals. [38] The Mughals were put to flight.

During October-November, Zain-ud-din Ali Khan, who was the faujdar of Konkan and Nasik, came to see Aurangzeb. On his way back, sixteen miles from Ahmadnagar, he was attacked by the Marathas. In the small skirmish, he was injured and with a great difficulty he managed to escape from the clutches of the Marathas. [39]

In November 1706 Mir Numan, the Bakhshi of Chin Qulich Khan's army, along with one thousand cavalry men, was attacked by the Marathas near Mardi. (Sholapur district) He was wounded and later on died at Sholapur. Aman-ullah Khan rushed to his rescue. By the time he was able to make up the distance, Santaji Mohite, along with three thousand men, plundered Mardi and destroyed the fortress. Aman-ullah Khan gave a battle, but without any success. [40]

By the end of the year the Marathas recovered Vishalgadh, a fort of prime importance, from the Mughals. [41] Another

fort that fell to the Marathas during the period was Rangana.

Rambhaji, along with three thousand cavalrymen, laid siege to the village of Kayapur in pargana Ausa (3rd January 1707). Aman-ullah Khan, who was at Parenda, rushed to the rescue of the besieged. The Marathas raised the siege [42] and turned away. Aman-ullah Khan did not go in their persuit.

By the middle of January 1707, Timaji, a commander of the Marathas, along with five hundred men, arrived at Pimpalgaon, from Bahadurgadh. He indulged in collecting chauth from the Mughal officers of those villages. No opposition was offered to him by the local officers. The defence of the place was very weak and the soldiers were in a miserable condition. The Mughal thanedar, Aman-ullah Khan, [43] could not muster even four soldiers, as reported in the Akhbarat, to give fight to the Marathas. Perhaps similar was the situation in most of the thanas under the Mughals in this last phase of the struggle of the Marathas.

8. The Maratha Penetration – Marathwada

Aurangabad Region (1706 & Earl y 1707)

During April-May, Siyadat Khan, a Mughal mansabdar, was captured by the Marathas. He was on his way to Ahmadnagar from Aurangabad, and was engaged in conveying treasury, horses, camels and large equipments to the Mughal camp at Ahmadnagar.

In the Aurangabad territory the Marathas had struck terror. After the capture of Kondana, Zulfiqar Khan was immediately ordered to proceed to Aurangabad territory. Leaving his baggage at Ahmadnagar, he advanced towards Tisgaon and then followed the Marathas towards Beed. From thence he turned towards Parli-Vaijanath in order to chase Dhanaji and crossed the Dharampuri pass. The Marathas, keeping the track of Zulfiqar Khan's movements, swiftly turned towards Ausa, Tuljapur and Parenda, and then crossed the Bhima river in order to reach Mahadev hills.

After a hopeless persuit of the Marathas, Zulfiqar Khan returned to Ahmadnagar. The Mughal army suffered heavy losses both in manpower and in transport animals, horses etc. [44] This happened during April-May 1706.

During the last week of November 1706 Parsoji Bhosale, along with five thousand men laid siege to Vetalwadi fort (near Aurangabad). The Mughal qil'edar, Kuchak Khan, defended the fort. Immediately Mansur Khan was ordered to reinforce him and also to escort the royal treasury which was being conveyed to Aurangabad. [45] A small contingent, which had started from Aurangabad, was attacked by the Marathas. [46]

By the middle of December, a Maratha force, consisting of about one thousand cavalry men, was active near Aurangabad. A battle took place about twelve kos from Aurangabad. Khwaja Quli Khan, Khwaja Mas'uad Khan, and Mir Muhammad fought from the Mughal side. They lost about fifteen men in dead and many in wounded. [47]

In January 1707, a Maratha force consisting of four hundred men under the command of the son of Hanumant (Nimbalkar) was active near Aurangabad. The Mughal officers from Aurangabad showed some resistance, [48] but without any successful results. Immediately Mansur Khan was ordered to reinforce them.

The Maratha Penetration In Khandesh And Berar (1706)

After the rainy season was practically over, in September 1706, Dhanaji, with his army rushed into Khandesh and Berar. Immediately Zulfiqar Khan went on his tail. Nothing of any consequence seems to have happened during this chase, and Zulfiqar Khan returned to Miraj.

In the first week of December 1706, a Maratha force consisting about ten thousand men, was freely moving in Gandapur in Khandesh. On 15th December 1706, the Mughal faujdar Amanat Sayyid Ahmad gave a fight to them. But he

was defeated. He lost sixty men in killed and many were wounded and taken prisoners by the Marathas. [49]

In the same month a certain Shuja'Beg, who was proceeding from Nevasat (Nevasa) to Burhanpur, was attacked by the Marathas. They looted his bag and baggage as well as horses and camels and took him prisoner. Later on he secured his release probably by way of paying some ransom. In the same month, Rangnath, son of Mambaji, the Mughal thanedar of Manor, was attacked and killed by a Maratha force consisting of two hundred men. They carried away horses and weapons. [50]

Sometime in December, Parsoji Bhosale left Aurangabad for Burhanpur by way of Surat. His men reached the suburb of Burhanpur called Pairamun. This was evidently with the intention of looting the royal treasury which had reached there from Bengal and was kept in the fort. The Mughal officer Najabat Khan defended the town. [51] Another Maratha force was active near Nandurbar and had the intentions of going to Surat. The Mughal officer Aman-ullah Khan was asked to remain alert. [52]

In January 1707, the Marathas were again active near Burhanpur under the command of Santa Atoliya (Atole). He raised the siege of Raver village and marched towards Changdevi. The Mughal officer Najabat Khan gave a fight. Meanwhile, Parsoji Bhosale, collected chauth amounting to one lac and fifty thousand rupees from the town of Gandhli in Amalner pargana. From there he headed towards Bhusaval. Najabat Khan, the Mughal officer instead of resisting and chasing the Marathas, returned to his town. [53]

In the first week of January, it seems he had moved towards Nandurbar. Ekka Taj Khan, the Mughal officer chased him away. Then he crossed the Tapti river. [54]

The Marathas Penetrate Into Telangana And Andhra Region (1706)

In July 1706 the Marathas took the fort of Penukonda from its Mughal qil'edar. [55] This singular success was

achieved by Hindurao Ghorpade. Immediately, Aurangzeb detached Tarbiyat Khan, to protect that territory. [56]

From thence the Marathas marched into Sira. Siyadat Khan a Mughal commander was captured and held for ransom. It seems that the Marathas marched into Telangana region in the month of December 1706. They laid siege to the fort of Medak. Tarbiyat Khan was ordered to chastise the Marathas and rescue the besieged. [57]

The narrative given so far, comprises of various events, though stray in nature, are still useful in reconstructing the history of this period and study the impact the Marathas had created on the then prevailing political situation. These events throw ample light on the military movements of the Marathas and also the decline of the Mughal power in the Maratha land. A spy report of the Mughals during this period comes in good stead to enable us to understand the confidence and the military strength the Marathas were able to establish. The report is made from the vicinity of the Rangana fort by about 23rd January 1707. It says, 'Shivaji II ordered Parashurampant to establish a post near Kolhapur. But Parashurampant is so confident about his men and their capabilities (of defeating the Mughal forces) that he advised Shivaji II, not to make any haste. Aurangzeb has become extremely weak, and it was possible for him (Parashurampant) to take easily all the forts in the shortest time, say even a day.' [58]

9. The Grim End Of Aurangzeb

By the beginning of January 1707, Aurangzeb and his army had become terribly weak nd wornout. Most of the prominent commanders and generals did not appear to be active at all. Perhaps the only exception was that of Zulfiqar Khan and Aman-ullah Khan. The game was being played, because it could not have been stopped. In a routine way the orders were being issued by Aurangzeb to chastise the Marathas, but none obeyed them seriously. The Maratha sword had created sufficient terror among the rank and file

of the Mughals, that on most of the occasions they avoided direct confrontation.

Thus the end of the warfare was approaching. The Emperor of Hindustan, Aurangzeb, the strongest of the Mughal emperors, had ultimately to bow before the Marathas and the sickening old age. His illness was increasing day by day. Hardly he could sit down or attend to the court matters. Added to it there was the constant worry of aggressive activities of the Marathas. Their strength had increased considerably and they had become quite powerful in almost all the imperial dominions. A captive of the situation he had become a helpless spectator, watching the fall of his empire. His generals and army commanders proved to be ineffective during the long and sustained struggle with the Marathas. His energies were exhausted. He was lying on the sick-bed at Bhingar, near Ahmadnagar, praying Allah for fulfullment of that long cherrished desire, the victory over the infidels. But the ways of the Destiny are always strange. Instead of success and victory, unfortunately it was the death which knocked at the door.

On Friday, the 21st February 1707, he breathed his last at Ahmadnagar. [59] And the guns in the Mughal camp fell into silence. The fighting ceased. The Mughal divisions and the army commanders were recalled. The war which had commenced twenty five years ago, thus came to an end.

NOTES

1. Dilkusha p.140a
2. Bhimsen in his Tarikh-i Dilkusha, gives a detailed account and a graphic picture of the state of affairs prevailing in the Mughal dominions everywhere. He also draws our attention to the miserable condition of the farmers, cultivators and the lowest class of the people in the society. We are also informed about the corrupt practices of the Mughal officers at various levels and the exploitation of the ryot by them. Added to it the Maratha roving bands collected all that possibly they could get from these villagers. (Dilkusha pp.139b, 140a, 141a, 146a, 149a).
3. Dilkusha pp. 139a - 140a
4. HA, Vol. V, p.240
5. KK, pp.517-18
6. MSIH, Vol.III, No.287, pp.33-35. Rajewadi and Khanwadi are in Poona district.
7. SCP, p.68, MA, p.480
8. Storia Do Mogor, Vol.III, p.505.
9. MA, pp.489-90.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid. SCP, p.68
12. Dilkusha p.149b. Bhimsen further states that 'the enemy's (Marathas) audacity this year exceeded that of last year'.
13. SCP, p.68. Peshwa Daftar Vol.31, No.88, p.77
14. Peshwa Daftar Vol.31, No.90, p.79
15. SCP, p.68
16. Rajaram by G.S. Sardesai, pp.109, 121-22.
17. MM, p.180. Kona Shinde, this name appears to be unintelligible. I suggest, it may be Gunaji, abbreviated on the style of Persian writers as Guna and in the text it might have been written as Kona, which is an usual practice with Persian writers.
18. Dilkusha pp.148a-148b.
19. Ibid, p.149a
20. Akh, J.46 Rabi I, 2. SCP, p.68, MSIH Vol. IV, No.29, p.36. Akhbarat mention that Nemaji returned to Maharashtra sometime in May-June 1704. He ravaged Chanda and Deogadh.
21. SCP, p.68. MA, p.480. According to Saqi Must'ad Khan, Firuz Jang received a cash reward of one lac rupees and promotion to the rank of 7 hazari. But Bhimsen questions the so called victory of Firuz Jang. In his opinion, the Khan sent a false report to the emperor. (Dilkusha p.148b).

22. MA, p.499. According to Akhbarat the Maratha force arrived near Wagingera on 26th March. Khafi Khan, estimated that the Maratha force was around eight to nine thousand cavalry soldiers.
23. MA, p.512. SCP, p.69, gives the date as 12th April.
24. Dilkusha p.156a, Manucci, Storia Do Mogor Vol. IV, p.246.
25. The author of Mirat-Ahmadi, (pp. 378-88) gives the date as 4th March. KK, p.518 informs us that Maratha army consisted of 15-16 thousand men and eight thousand infantry of Koli tribe. Iltafit Khan, Faujdar of Thaneshwar and Godhra was also present during the battle and he was the only person who escaped safe.
26. SCP, p.68 gives the date of capture of Wagingera as 1st May.
27. MA, p.508. KK, p.539. HA, Vol.V, p.245.
28. MA, p.510. SCP, p.69.
29. KK, p.541. MA, p.511 is silent about it.
30. Dilkusha p.155a.
31. MA, p.511, SCP, p.69.
32. Dilkusha p.155b
33. Ibid.
34. Akh, J.51 Ramzan 11
35. Akh, J.51 Ramzan 16
36. Akh, J.51 Shawwal 29.
37. Akh, J.51 Shawwal 13.
38. MSIH Vol.IV No.138, pp.135-36.
39. Akh, J.50 Shaban 7. Dilkusha p.157b.
    Akhbarat mention that a certain Kaka who was with Zain-ud-din Khan received a bullet in the throat and most of the Mughal soldiers were killed.
40. Akh, J.51, Ramzan 6.
41. Rajwade Vol.XXI, No.14, pp.36-37.
42. Akh, J.51, Shawwal 11.
43. Akh, J.51 Ziqadah 3.
44. Dilkusha p.156b.
45. Akh, J.51 Ramzan 9.
46. Ibid Ramzan 16.
47. Akh, J.51 Shawwal 2.
48. Ibid. Shawwal 20
49. Akh, J.51 Ramzan 12.
50. Ibid. Ramzan 21.
51. Akh, J.51 Ramzan 19.
52. Akh, J.51 Shawwal 2.
53. Ibid. Shawwal 26.

54. Ibid. Shawwal 23.
55. Dilkusha p.156b. Bhimsen mentions the name of Hindu Rao, the Maratha sardar who achieved this success, along with Pid Nayak, the Bedar chief. The qil'edar was held for ransom. According to Prof. Sarkar the Marathas secured the fort by giving bribe to the Mughal qil'edar who was starving for his pay. (Manucci Storia Do Mogor, Vol.IV, pp.249-52.)
56. Dilkusha, p.156b.
57. Akh, J.51 Shawwal 2.
58. Akh, J.51 Shawwal 29.
59. According to Marathi sources Aurangzeb died at Bhingar a place close to Ahmadnagar. With regard to the date of his death there appears to be some confusion. J. Sarkar in HA, Vol.V, p.257, gives the date of his death as 20th February 1707. According to MA, p.521 he died on Friday 28 Ziqadah 1118 A.H. i.e. 21 February 1707 (Swamikannu Pillai's Indian Ephemeris Vol.VI - A.D. 1600 A.D.1700 p.216). The week day was quite definite. Aurangzeb several times expressed his wish to die on Friday. MA has specifically mentioned that he died on Friday. The date corresponding to Friday is 28th Ziqadah i.e. 21 february 1707 and not 20th February.

5. In Retrospection - The Fateful Twenty Five Years

On 21st February 1707, the mortal existence of Aurangzeb came to an end and along with it the long war in the Deccan. The war had been incessantly carried on for twenty-five years. The guns in both the camps of war fell into uneasy silence. The Deccan plateau activised by the presence of the Mughal soldiers became suddenly peaceful. The iliad of woes was over. The fury of the war seemed to calm down. There was lull and silence. The silence was symbolic; the storm was over. It was symbolic of a homage to the martyrs of the recently ended war. And it was something much more than that. It was eloquent of the fact that those who fight for liberty and honour would always emerge victorious. It unmistakably brought home the lesson that the Maratha state was prepared to sacrifice the last living soul in order to defend its liberty and honour. The guns of the Mughals were silenced only to prove this.

The struggle which thus came to an end is treated by many as a skirmish in the roster of the major wars of history, but in reality this collision between India's most powerful emperor and the people of a very small state was a major affair, not only in terms of its dimensions but also for its long term effects. It cost thousands of lives, equally large was the number of horses and transport animals that perished, the destruction of property was unaccountable, the miseries suffered by the people were immeasurable.

The Maratha state was opposed by a very powerful ruler viz. Aurangzeb. With all the resources of the empire at his disposal, Aurangzeb decided to launch an aggressive attack

against the Deccani kingdoms in general and the Marathas in particular. In manpower he had mustered armies second to none. In brilliance of diplomacy and experience he was matchless. He had spent half a century of his long life, fighting wars and practising state-craft. He was an unchallenged master of everything including men, material, equipment, army-organization and administration. And equally well he surpassed all others in cunning and state-craft, in diplomacy and religious bigotry. He combined religion and politics. Some times to achieve his political ends he took the shelter of religion and in carrying out the spread of his religion, he made an unrestrained use of political machinery.

To him the province of the Deccan, ever remained an overwhelming attraction. But the land unfortunately remained ever invincible. The ambition to conquer that territory became irrepressible with Aurangzeb since the failure of the negotiations conducted by Bahadur Khan with Shivaji (1676) and the latter's open championship of the cause of the Deccani rulers.

The immense qualitative change that had come about since the accession of Alamgir on the Delhi throne in 1659, was certainly a pointer to the future events in the Deccan and to the direction of the development of Mughal-Maratha relations. Aurangzeb aspired and occupied himself with the goal of one empire, one rule and one religion and the empire had to embrace the whole of Hindustan, the banner that of the Mughals and the religion that of Islam. He was determined to fulfil this ideal. For him, wishes of the people whom he was going to rule, was not a matter for any serious consideration. Never did he show any respect for the Hindus nor he had much reverence for their religion.

Reimposition of jizya on the Hindus by Aurangzeb proved to be a very oppressive measure aimed at squeezing the poorer classes of that community thus leaving them no option but to embrace Islam. In the past the Hindus resisted

such measures very firmly, and had opposed it with great vehemence. It was a regressive tax, bore mostly on the poorer class. But some modern historians represent a different point of view. According to them circumstances necessitated Aurangzeb to take this step 'as a consequence of the growing spirit of opposition to the Empire among the Hindus, leaving Aurangzeb no option but to appeal to the loyalty of the Muslims by reverting to a more specifically Muslim state.' But it must be remembered that in a purely Muslim state, the growth and progress of non-Muslims, perhaps their continued existence, is incompatible with the basic principles of Islamic tenets. A strict interpretation of Islamic laws sets up a permanent antagonism between the ruler and the ruled in a multi-religious country. This has eventually caused the breakdown of every Islamic state with composite populations. And the empire of Aurangzeb proved to be no exception.

Aurangzeb's most beloved son prince Akbar rose in rebellion against his father and he was given shelter by the Maratha king Sambhaji. On this immediate pretext and provocation the Mughal armies were marched into the Deccan. They were followed by the Emperor himself.

The period of nine years (1680-89) was a remarkable period both for the Mughals as well as for the Marathas. It was a period of successive victories and high hopes for the Mughals. It was a period of continuous withdrawals, defeats and despair for the Marathas. The Mughal army led by generals of repute and experience was able to run through the land of Maharashtra. The efficient cavalry and well equipped artillery, though unfamiliar to the terrain of Maharashtra, penetrated deep into its various regions. With their superior numbers and vast supplies the Mughals were able to surmount all types of difficulties and were able to silence the Maratha opposition for a while.

By January 1688 Aurangzeb had completed the liquidation of the two Islamic states viz. Adil Shahi and

Qutb Shahi. In another year's time Shaikh Muqarrab captured and imprisoned the Maratha king, Sambhaji. Shortly he was executed publicly. With the execution of Sambhaji, Aurangzeb calculated that the Marathas would be left without a king and without a leader. What was expected to come out of such a situation was nothing but chaos and disorder that would be to the great advantage of the invader. A reign of terror now stretched its arms in the Maratha country. United and firm opposition to the victorious Mughal arms was considered to be too distant a possibility.

The king of Bijapur, the king of Golkonda and the king of the Marathas all were vanquished. Their territories were mostly brought under Mughal administration, (1689). It was perhaps the finest hour in the life of the Emperor. However, it soon turned out to be an illusion. Inspite of such resounding victories, all did not seem well with the Mughal emperor and his imperial dominion. Those very victories bore the seeds of what eventually proved to be an anticlimax of Aurangzeb's life and achievements. 'It was the beginning of his end, the saddest and most hopeless chapter of his life now opened. The Mughal Empire had become too large to be ruled by one man from one centre. His enemies rose from all sides, he could defeat but not crush them forever. The administration grew slack and corrupt. The endless war in the Deccan exhausted his treasury. The Deccan ulcer ruined him.' But that is anticipating things, one has to revert to 1689.

With the disappearance of Sambhaji from the political scene, the chaos and disorder as was expected by Aurangzeb, did not take place. Instead we notice, people uniting in arms to meet the aggression. They were resolved to fight back with firmness and confidence of a true soldier. This resolve was carefully cultivated. Uppermost in their minds was intense love for 'Swaraj' and willful determination to stop the march of the invading Mughal armies. They appeared to be determined to defend their liberty, honour and religion. The

official correspondence of the Maratha kings and their ministers and sardars and other men of repute, amply testifies to the efforts made by Sambhaji and Rajaram to warn the people about the real nature of the danger. Sambhaji made constant efforts to unite all the Deshmukhs, Desais and Vatandars as they formed the nucleus of the Maratha kingdom. They also controlled unmustered militia in the country, which was to be utilized in the war against the Mughals. In his appeal to the people, Sambhaji stressed that it was 'Swaraj' that was in danger. Those Marathas who had joined Mughal service with the expectation of certain material gains were reminded that the Mughals were foreigners, and acceptance of service under them amounted to acceptance of slavery.

He also laid emphasis on the need of a well organised army to defeat the Mughals. His minister Kavi Kalash wrote to the Deshmukhs of Kanadkhore (1684),'....at this hour of need, all the vatandars must be united in order to punish the enemy.' In a similar way he wrote to Moghe Prabhu Desai of Hukeri (1686), that 'the Desai should know, that there is no need to compromise with the Mughals and other disloyal elements. This is the hour for you to display your good will towards the Chhatrapati and the kingdom.'

The force that united the Marathas was the determination to protect Maharashtra Dharma and Swaraj. Utmost sanctity was attached to these two concepts. They symbolised nationalism and patriotism. Maharashtra Dharma proved to be a magnetic force attracting all people in Maharashtra under one banner for the sole cause of Maharashtra Rajya. It had a direct appeal to the sentiments of the people. They were made to realise that it was their kingdom, and their religion that faced the danger of destruction. Contemporary official records of Rajaram speak repeatedly of this danger, and exhibit the depths of the feelings of the king as well as other worthy and notable men of the time.

Sambhaji, Rajaram and a majority of Maratha nobility stood united for protection of Maharashtra Rajya and Maharashtra Dharma. Thus the entire movement was a struggle for preservation of independence and freedom of religion. Rajaram and his ministers were convinced that if the people were united in arms against Aurangzeb, success was not beyond reach. Under their leadership the people were inspired into making every possible sacrifice in order to achieve success. The impact of Maharashtra dharma in the 17th century Deccan was very great, particularly its effect on the political situation. It was one factor that united the people. In a letter despatched to Ghorpade , Rajaram is very eloquent about the policy of the state and political ideology, when he states 'you have expressed your desire to serve this country of God and Brahmanas and thus bring prosperity to yourself. This has been conveyed to me through Shamji Chintamani. I am greatly pleased. There could not have been a better object than this for you to serve. This kingdom is the kingdom of you people .... you should join with your armed contingent and thus help in carrying out the mission.'[2]

One can go even a step further. Subsequent events of the history of this period testify to the strength of this sentiment of unity. It grew stronger in later years. Some people occasionally deserted the Marathas and thus betrayed the cause of 'Swaraj', but the movement did not falter. Nothing ever discouraged them. They were not fighting for an individual, or a king, but they were up in arms for an ideal. Consequently the disappearance or the death of a king or a leader did not have much adverse impact on the quality of fighting or on the continuation of war.

There are a few letters from Rajaram addressed to various persons from Karnataka and Maharashtra, which emphatically state that the Maharashtra Rajya, was the kingdom of God and the people. Their duty was to protect the kingdom that was embodiment of Maharashtra Dharma. There could not have been a better appeal from a king to his

subjects. It clearly reveals that Rajaram, the king made himself a subordinate entity to the people. This fervent appeal succeeded in creating a complete identity of views between people and their king, thus enabling them to achieve the desired goal. The effectiveness of the united action by the Marathas succeeded in creating tremendous impact on the Mughals. It was being effectively felt by the Mughal soldiers as well as their commanders. The initial victorious march of the Mughal armies in the homeland of the Marathas was considerably checked. The changed situation, particularly the united and determined opposition by the supposedly and shattered Maratha forces, did not escape the attention of Aurangzeb. He noticed something dreadful in the land of the Marathas. Though their king was executed and the state was leaderless, the people mustered enough courage to offer resistance to the victorious Mughal armies, that also not in isolated places but in every nook and corner of the land. But unfortunately he could never realise that he was encountering a people informed by an ideal.

Ramchandrapant, Shankarajipant, Pralhad Niraji, Khandoji Nayak Pansambal, Dhanaji Jadhav, Santaji Ghorpade, Manaji More, Nemaji Shinde, were but a few of a host of personalities, who were entrusted by Rajaram with the administration of the state and military preparedness. They were a relentless and stubborn lot and with great skill and insight gauged the strength and subtlety of their opponent's mind. They busied themselves in improvising strategy of war and obtaining additional resources to sustain that effort.

To its accomplishment they applied themselves with single minded determination. No fascination of an 'inam land' or a 'royal mansab' in the Mughal service could distract them from their sole aim. They worked in unanimity with others. They consecrated themselves to this great enterprise with a zeal and energy that bewildered even their adversaries.

Great emphasis was laid on uniting the people. Many of

the sardars who had joined the Mughal service were brought back into the Maratha fold. In 1690, Rajaram appealed to Jedhe Deshmukh to rejoin Maharashtra Rajya and strive to protect it. His return to the Maratha fold proved to be of immense value. In 1691 Nagoji Mane rejoined the Marathas. Rajaram wrote to him that the kingdom of the Chhatrapati was the kingdom of God and that efforts had to be made to preserve Maharashtra Dharma which it symbolised. As a consequence of it, two other prominent Maratha sardars immediately followed the suit. They were Hanumantrao and Krishnaji Ghorpade. Rajaram greeted them warmly. In 1692, Antaji Udhav, an influential Maratha sardar, was won over.

These are but a few examples of the relentless efforts made by Rajaram in uniting the people for the cause of Swaraj and Maharashtra Dharma. This is a sufficient pointer in bringing home the point about the underlying current which brought out unity of purpose among the people of Maharashtra. The people in general and the local leaders in particular took up initiative in the matter. This brought a great deal of confidence in the rank and file of the Marathas. The leadership became completely decentralized. Through the efforts of these lesser known men, the villagers became alert and lent their active support to fight the war against the Mughals.

By 1689, the entire Konkan region had passed in the possession of Ma'tabar Khan. He was the master of all the fifty forts in that territory. Except for the capture of Raigadh, which also was invested by Zulfiqar Khan, the Mughals had conquered all the forts in Konkan. Their armies were marching unhindered in all the other parts of Maharashtra as well. In order to meet this grave situation, Rajaram and his ministers worked out a plan of action.

A new strategy of war was evolved, its main aim was to create diversions in the Mughal army. A 'Second Front' was made operative from Jinji from outside Maharashrtra. This

brought many advantages to the Marathas and primarily assured the safety of their king. With the adoption of this policy Rajaram entrusted the burden of administration in Maharashtra proper to the two most able persons viz. Ramchandrapant and Shankaraji. These two loyal servants of the kingdom were brilliant in wit and speech, relentless in their efforts, ever worked for the unity of the people and defence of the country. Their task was gigantic and required herculean efforts. The condition of the people was alarming. Almost every face they saw wore a look of despair, almost every mile they travelled was littered with the wreckage left by the invading army. Burning and looting of the villages had assumed unimaginable proportions. Stray dogs stood sentinal over the debris of once prosperous habitations. Farms went without cultivation. Men were emaciated and hungry, the army was in a state of disorder and such of the forts that were under their possession, were like empty shells-without adequate garrisons, food and provisioning, arms and ammunition.To make adequate provisions, to raise a fairly ordered army and above all to raise the 'morale' of the people was no mean task.

From October 1689 till October 1697, i.e. for a period of eight years, the Marathas maintained their 'Second Front' at Jinji in a most successful way. Their main purpose was to keep away the Mughal forces, which were concentrating in Maharashtra. Jinji proved to be the best place for shelter and safety for their king. In a period of eight years both these objectives were achieved effectively.

It is usually the difference in the leadership and therefore the strategy and tactics employed on the battlefield that play a decisive part in these engagements. A detailed study of the battles fought over this period, points out that the Maratha soldiers did not deem themselves any way inferior to the Mughal soldiers and the invading army. They never considered themselves soundly beaten, when fortunes of battle went against them. They were always eager to stake

their fortune again and again. Santaji and Dhanaji were great military leaders. They evolved a mode of warfare different very largly from the traditional modes of fighting. Their sudden attacks, temporary retreats, keeping the reserve forces and to follow the attacks or to be in readiness in the critical moments, gave them a big lead over their opponents. The element of surprise attack introduced by Santaji proved to be most effective in clinching success in most of the battles fought in Karnataka. Dhanaji employed the same technique of warfare in Maharashtra. The Marathas fought every square inch they occupied. Therefore, by 1697, Ramchandrapant and Shankaraji were confident enough to give a sustained fight to the Mughals in Maharashtra itself. The necessity of continuing the 'Second Front' had ceased. Between January-February 1698, Rajaram returned to Maharashtra and Jinji was captured by the Mughals.

By now the Maratha leadership could well realise the incapacity of any major retaliation by the Mughal forces. The Mughal army had become weary and sick of wars in Maharashtra and Karnataka. During the past seventeen years they hardly had any time to repose. The dissensions and personal rivalries among the Mughal generals were ever on increase. The commands given by Aurangzeb were hardly obeyed to its fullest extent. By now a large number of men were consumed by flames of the war. Many well known commanders from the Mughal army were slain in several battles that were fought against the Marathas. Added to this misery, was the attitude of the local villagers and inhabitants, who refused to consider a Mughal soldier as his friend and ally. He was frowned upon with suspicion and was denied any help. As the scales of the war seemed to be turning in favour of the Marathas, many started deserting the Mughal army.

The Marathas, glancing rapidly at their past were convinced that they had effectively withstood the Mughal

onslaught. Though their losses in man power and material were by no estimation low, yet the determination to fight the aggression had not withered away. They did not become weary and sick of the war. They mustered more courage in order to fight more vehemently. By now they had gained sufficient confidence that no single large army of the Mughals could wipe them out. They were capable of facing the Mughal guns with all the confidence of a soldier.

This brought in them a new vision. From the year 1699 onwards their role was changed. From defensive role they chose an offensive one and planned a new strategy of war. Rajaram's coming back to Maharashtra gave a great blow to the Mughal power and prestige.

But shortly, in April 1700, the Marathas received a great set back in the death of Rajaram, their king.

The unexpected blow of Rajaram's death was too severe for the Maratha people and leaders to bear it silently. No doubt, by progressive years in the nation's life, the people and its popular leaders had experienced more severe, and more cruel blows in the past. After the death of Sambhaji, people rushed to Rajaram as their legitimate leader and a 'sheet anchor' of the state. And unmistakably he proved worthy of it. With the death of Rajaram, the glorious chapter of the Mughal-Maratha war remained incomplete. But the destiny willed that the fight should continue and in Tarabai, the dowager queen and her son Shivaji II the hand of providence worked. The fighting continued ceaselessly.

Tarabai a gallant and diplomat woman, who herself had witnessed the war with the Mughals, took upon herself to arrange the matters of statecraft and inspect the Maratha armies. It was due to an inexhaustible fountain of energy which she possessed, the Maratha nation drew its inspiration. Herself coming from a warrior clan, she had well grasped the military situation and importance of continuing the struggle against the Mughal invasion. Khafi Khan admits that she had successfully arranged the

administration and had equipped armies in order to fight the Mughals. Thus in a period of twenty years since the death of Shivaji, (1680) she was the third in that glorious hierarchy of Bhosale clan to lead successfully the destinies of four million people of Maharashtra.

By the time, Tarabai could effectively make any arrangements to meet the challenge of the Mughal arms most of the Maratha forts had gone under the control of the Mughals. (1700 A.D.) In fact, with the conquest of most of the forts, Aurangzeb might have safely presumed that the Marathas were completely humbled and they could never raise their heads high again. But alas! Such was not the course of the Destiny. His assumptions merely turned out to be part of his wishful thinking. In reality day by day the Marathas were becoming more and more strong. It was Aurangzeb's army which ultimately got exhausted in the process of these campaigns of the hilly regions. The Maratha war strategy was making a headway towards success. The Government under Tarabai and Shivaji II was firmly establishing itself. Their officers had started collecting revenues from the Mughal dominions. Their qil'edars, who had in the past handed over the forts to the Mughal soldiers, induldged in re-taking them one after the other with ease, confidence and certainty of success. How was the Mughal Emperor to reconcile with the situation? Many a time, he simply chose to overlook all these adverse happenings. And perhaps that was the best course left open for him.

But Aurangzeb could never have been a helpless spectator of the politically adverse situation created by the leadership of the Marathas. He therefore, took upon himself the task of commanding the Mughal armies in person against the enemy. Uptill now his generals and army commanders had only failed and not himself. Therefore he decided to lead them to victory. He planned a new strategy of war, which was aimed at the ultimate defeat of the Marathas. The first step proposed by Aurangzeb in order to uproot the Marathas

was to capture all their hill forts. He explained this strategy to all his commanders. While justifying this step Khafi Khan says 'the shelter of this mean community (the Marathas) was the forts. Those were to be captured and thus the community was to be uprooted.' [3]

Thus the die was cast. Aurangzeb decided to follow a predetermined path, which ultimately led him not to victory but to defeat and despair. Now onwards, we notice, that the war, which was persued for past eighteen years, entered into its final phase. For the period of next five years, we notice, from the events in Maharashtra and elsewhere, that Aurangzeb commanded the Mughal armies in person against all the forts in the Sahyadri range. One by one he succeeded in capturing them, and one by one he lost them to the roving bands of the Marathas. In most of these campaigns successful results were achieved not by means of sword but by liberal use of gold currency being passed underhand to the Marathas.

The period of five years (1699-1704) of warfare between the Mughals and the Marathas is nothing but a sad repetition of forts being taken by the Mughals and retaken by the Marathas. The fort of Torna was perhaps the only exception, which was taken by the strength of the Mughal sword (March 1704). And this perhaps was the last campaign of Aurangzeb commanded in person against the Marathas.

By the beginning of the year 1704, the Marathas had become considerably active. They had gained tremendous strength. They were active in the valleys of the Sahyadri, Khandesh, Berar, Gondvana, Ujjain, Gujrat, Malwa and Bedar territory in the Karnataka. Hardly was there any province of Maharashtra, Western India, the Central and the Southern India, which was not attacked by the commanders of the Marathas. Everywhere, they ushered the Maratha rule. Officers were appointed by them to collect revenue from these provinces. The Mughal officers in charge of these territories hardly offered any resistance. And those who

dared resist the Marathas, were wiped out by the use of force. The terror struck by the Marathas was quite deep and created tremendous impact on these Mughal officers. On many occasions, they volunteered to pay the ransom demanded by the Marathas. Thus gradually but firmly the Marathas had started successfully asserting themselves. The aim of the Marathas during this period was to cause a total breakdown of the Mughal administration.

There is no province or district, confesses Aurangzeb in his last years, 'where the infidels have not raised a tumult and since they are not chastised, they have established themselves everywhere. Most of the country has been rendered desolate and if any place is inhabited, the peasants there have probably come to terms with the robber (i.e. the Marathas)'. These disturbing pieces of news though agonised Aurangzeb, yet never for a moment did he think of giving up his design. The hardships of thousands of innocent families caused by his devastating campaigns was no eye-opener to him. The unhindered flow of blood of the poor and the innocent shed during his lengthy campaigns could hardly rouse any feeling of sympathy in him. The condition of the Mughal army had deteriorated beyond any measure. There was a long and continued famine and nowhere the grain was cheap. The pay of the Mughal soldiers and officers was in arrears. Death and starvation stared at them. There was no food, no shelter, no clothing being provided by the government. Added to it were the fierce attacks of the Marathas, to which they were continuously exposed. Therefore some of them became desparate, and abandoned their posts in the Mughal army and the government. They joined hands with the Marathas and took up to plundering as an avowed profession. Such was the miserable plight of the Mughal soldiers, who had marched in to the land of the Marathas a few years ago with the proud objective of 'jihad'. Now they were reduced to the role of mercenaries, looking forward to bare survival. That zeal, that gusto, that enthusiasm of being 'jihada' all had vanished by now. The

Mughal soldiers, unlike their master, who was fired with iconoclastic and missionary zeal, could not identify themselves with this singular objective of destroying dar-ul-harb.

In February 1705, Aurangzeb left Maharashtra once again, in order to punish the Bedars in the Karnataka territory. The Marathas promptly helped the Bedars against Aurangzeb and thus prolonged the agony and misery of the Mughal soldiers.

At home the Marathas took the forts one by one after the exit of Aurangzeb from Maharashtra. They had become very powerful. In the words of Manucci, ... "they move like conquerors and showing no fear of any Mughal troops."

In April 1705, the Bedars surrendered to Aurangzeb and that campaign proved to be the last campaign of his life. Now his body had become worn out and there were apparant signs of decay. He was not able to stand erect or support himself properly. From now onwards he fell continuously sick, and at Devapur, the rumour of his death was spread. But by his public appearance he cleared the rumour.

From Devapur he marched towards Bahadurgadh and then arrived at Ahmadnagar. This proved to be the last stopover of his mortal existence.

On 20th January 1706 he arrived at Ahmadnagar. His sickness and old age compelled him to give up all the activities of subduing the Marathas, though he still ordered Zulfiqar Khan and Tarbiyat Khan to take Sinhgadh from the Marathas.

For next one year or so, movements of the Marathas gathered tremendous momentum. They were active not only in Maharashtra, but Nemaji, Kesopant and the other Marathas crossed the Narmada and created great impact on Malwa, Central India and part of Gujrat. The Mughal officers hardly offered any resistance to these Maratha invadors.

Reports of the Maratha activities often reached Aurangzeb. But alas! Everything appeared to be beyond his control. Weary and sick he was lying on the bed, hardly attending to the court. The age had worn him out. Now he was only awaiting the grim end of his life.

On 21st February 1707,Aurangzeb's mortal existence came to an end and with that the long and weary war also came to an end.

His chief aim of marching the Mughal armies in the Deccan was not at all achieved. He did not leave a single stone unturned to achieve his objective. But his efforts were not destined to be crowned with success. There was gross disappointment and haunting frustration for him in store. Everything which seemed going well in the beginning went exactly opposite in the end. His ambition of subduing the Marathas remained unfulfilled. His 'Jihad' proved to be ineffective. He failed miserably in converting Dar-ul-harb into Dar-ul-Islam.

The Mughal invasion of the land of the Marathas was a conflict between incompatible conceptions of two communities, and it was carried out with great ferocity. There is no reason to suppose that one side in this conflict was moribund, the other abounding with vigour. It was a conflict in which one side was going to prevail at the expense of the other. It is hoped that readers, whichever side their own sympathies may go, will at least agree that there existed a real conflict of two principles and not of material interest.

It is often said that the period from 1680 till 1707 has been one of the most brilliant and memorable periods in the history of the Marathas. In fact, "It is the history of the formation of a true Indian Nationality, raising its head high above the troubled waters of Mohamedan confusion." [4] This period of twenty five years in the Deccan marks a new era in the history of the Marathas. It was the final phase of the struggle began by Shivaji a few decades earlier. This type of struggle was comparatively new in the history of India and

was rarely seen at any time in the earlier periods. There was a great qualitative difference. It was a mass struggle. The initiative of the movement now had come to be vested in the hands of the common man. The long drawn war was a movement in which men were determined to defend their liberty and honour. Any aggression against these was met firmly. No force, howsoever strong it might have been, could possibly have changed these people from their solemn resolve.

The long war lasting for about twenty five years showed that none but men of iron will could alone withstand such trials. The triumph of the Marathas was the triumph of a people, a nation rather than that of a king or some militant folks. The historical events of this period do bear witness to the fact that people followed their leaders, who had advocated the worthy cause of Swaraj and Maharashtra Dharma. The death or disappearance of a king or a leader did not bring any change in the attitudes of the people. They continued the fight with the same vigour and dynamism as in the past. It indeed became something like a people's war, perhaps for the first time in History of India. With this long and enduring struggle, persistently fought over twenty five years, the Mughal-Maratha relations took a new turn. The roles are now reversed. The turn of the century saw the Marathas emerging as a major political force on the Indian political scene. And by the time cold weather came, the corrosive antagonism that had caused the "jihad", seemed to have submerged.

NOTES

1. Faruki, Aurangzeb and His Times. pp.148-51 and I.H. Qureshi, The Muslim Community in the Indo-Pakistan Sub-continent, pp.161-3.
2. SCS, Vol.IV, No.726 pp.78-79. This letter appears to have been addressed to some prominent member of Ghorpade family by Rajaram.
3. KK, p.459.
4. RMP, p.4

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Original Contemporary Primary Source Material

Akhbarat-i-Darbar-i-Mu'alla And Vakil Reports (Persian)

In the Rajasthan State Archives in Bikaner there are about 400 Akhbars or Daily Court Bulletins and a few Vakil Reports issued from the Court of Aurangzeb out of which those belonging to Aurangzeb's regnal years 23 to 51 have been extracted and extensively used in the present work.

Sawant Wadi Papers (Persian)

These have been acquired by Prof. G.H. Khare in 1961 from S.A. Chitnis of Sawant Wadi through the present Sawant Wadi Chief Shivram Raje Bhosale. They are about 45 in number, out of which a few have been used.

Neralikar Papers (Persian)

These have been acquired by Prof. G.H. Khare in 1959 from Shri. A.B. Neralikar of Nerali (Belgaum). They are 146 in number out of which some have been used.

All these records are contemporary ones and are in the form of Court News Bulletins or Orders issued by superior government officers of the Mughals or Adil Shahi Sultans to their subordinate officers and as such are quite invaluable for evidence. They are of the first grade importance. They shed a flood of light on many a point of historical importance which otherwise would have remained unnoticed.

A few of the above mentioned Akhbars, the author was unable to have them in the original, have been used by Sir J.N. Sarkar in his History of Aurangzeb (Vol.I to V). The Author has relied on Sir J.N. Sarkar's above work, while making use of them.

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10.	Rajwade,V.K.	Marathyanchya Itihasachi Sadhane, Vol.VIII, 1903, V.G.Vijapurkar, Kolhapur, Vol.XV, 1912, S.S. Deo, Dhulia. Vol.XVI, 1912. Vol. XVII; 1913, Tukaram Jayaji, Bombay.
11.	Sane,K.N.	Aitihasik Patre, Yadi Vagaire, 2nd Edition, 1930. S.N.Joshi, Chitrashala Press, Poona.
12.	Sardesai,G.S., K.P.Kulkarni and Y.M.Kale	Aitihasik Patravyavahar, 1933 Government Central Press, Bombay.
13.	Sardesai,G.S.	Peshwa's Daftar, Vol.31; 1933 Government Central Press, Bombay.
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Bharat Itihas Samshodhak Mandala, Poona.

15. Bharat Itihas Samshodhak Mandala Quarterly
Vol. II; April 1922 and Vol.IX, 1928.

The records contained in the above publications are generally original ones, most of which bear seals, signets and different endorsements which prove beyond doubt that they are as authentic as Persian ones mentioned above. And as such they are of immense value as contemporary evidence.

C. Contemporary Compilatory Source Material.

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3. Martin,F. — Memoirs de Francois. Translated By J.N.Sarkar In House Of Shivaji, 3rd Edition, 1955.
4. Orme Robert — Historical Fragments, 1782, London.
5. Parmanand Kavindra — Shiv Bharat, Edited By Divekar S.M., 1927.
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15.	Maulana Muhammad Ali	A Mannual of Hadis (Year of publication not given) Dost Muhammad Ahmadiyya Buildings, Lahore.
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(iv) Raja Karna, the son of Chatrapati Rajaram, Vol.XIX, p.159. by Dr. A.G.Pawar.
(v) Three Persian Documents concerning Baglan, Vol.XXIV, p.4. By Chaghtai, M.A.

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